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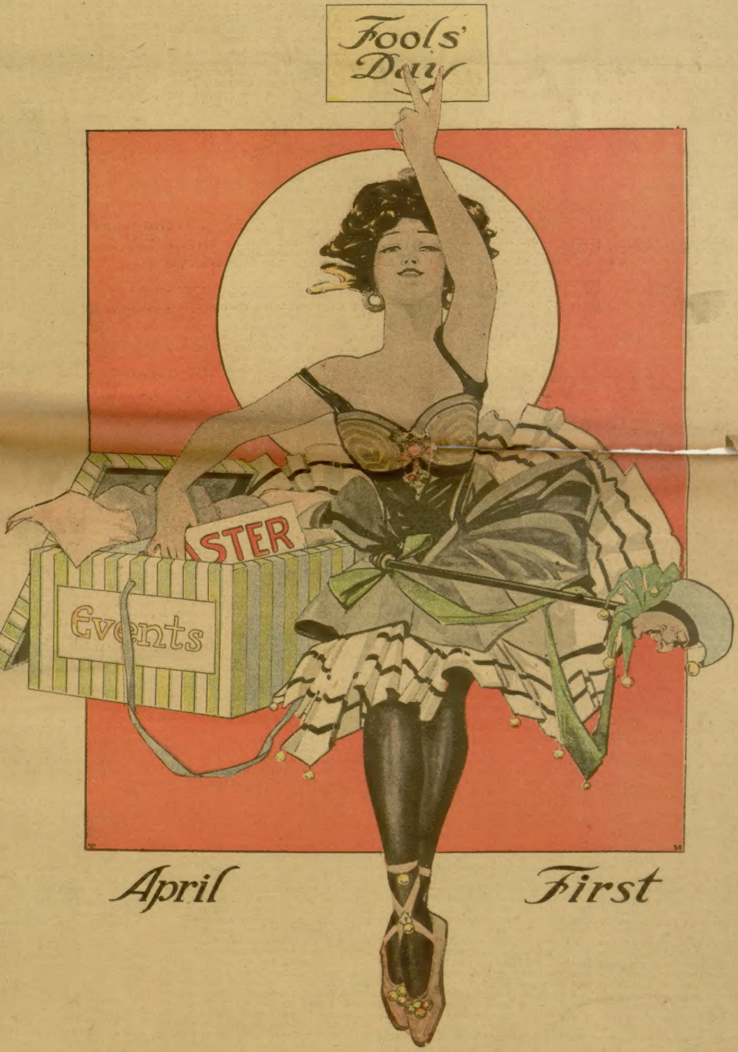

Fools' Day
ASTER
Events
April First

Won Thru Fire

By Howard Philip Rhoades

IT WAS the most beautiful face I ever had seen. Held again before my light, the girl in the picture enthralled me. Her youth and loveliness thrilled me anew, and the touch of wistful sadness in her strong face appealed for a special reason. Her serious side fitted in with the striving life I was leading. Again I marveled at my fortune in being engaged to marry Vera South.

I hear you say, "It's a poor story, with the hero engaged at the start." I am not the hero. I am only he who stood in the wings one memorable night and watched played out the climax of a thrilling drama.

But little did I suspect what was ahead that night, as I set my fiancee's picture upon my chiffonier and began to dress. I was consumed by the thought of meeting her. I forgot the frayed spots of my clothing, even my cold lonely home, the strangest dwelling a struggling law student ever claimed.

I was night watchman at Graystone Court. Pause, while I assemble for you the noises and echoes, the dust, the rats, the falling plaster and bare walls of this forlorn den. After three hard years at college, I had gone back to the city to start the fourth, and luckily had fallen upon the situation. Free of rent, I lived in the only finished room in Graystone Court, a vast uncompleted family hotel on a leading thorofare. Built of poor concrete, and started under an evil star, after years of neglect it was a fearsome place.

Bats, owls, cats of the night, rumblings, smells, and vagrants inhabited it. It was shaped like two L's with their feet together, and a great airshaft went up where the L's joined. It was like some medieval castle deserted by its builders, or like a ruined cloister. Dirt and rubbish were everywhere. Boys had knocked out the window-panes, and junk men had carried off the rough plumbing. The place was the laugh of the average cit[illegible] [illegible]producing [illegible] People once had sneered at it and mentioned how it hurt the town. But now it seemed quite forgotten and accepted, for it had stood there so for five years.

After a final pluck at my tie, I found myself ready to go, and turned out light and fire. I frequently left for a while at night, as I did not have to make regular rounds of the place. I was really only a figurehead with police powers and the authority to shoo off intruders.

Seldom had there been anything in connection with my office that was half-exciting. Yet this momentous night had surprises in store, and was not long in hinting at them. As I stepped into the hall away in a dim corner I fancied I saw a shadow flit. Unpleasantly chilled as I never had felt before in all my nights at Graystone Court, I grasped my oil lantern, hanging near the door of my room, and lighted it. I searched all over the first floor. There was nothing but gray wall, cobwebs, and dusty rafters. Outside the electric light was flickering. Perhaps its ghostly gleam had suggested a bogie. I decided to leave, promising myself a more thoro search upon my return.

Outside I found it one of those chilly March nights when clouds, whipped by a pursuing wind, scud past a white moon. As I looked back at the great inchoate bulk which formed my solitary home, the pathos of that dead blot against the heavens oppressed me. What was the full story of this mysterious place?

Some of it I knew. Henry Farnham, I had been told, built Graystone Court with all the money he could command and borrow. Hopelessly in debt, and unable to complete the place, his health had failed, and he had gone to Mexico. He had left matters in the hands of his lawyer, Ward Thompson, the man who employed me. Thompson could not raise money to finish Graystone Court. Already people were calling it "Farnham's Folly." But the lawyer managed, by selling all Farnham's other property, to settle all claims for money the owner had borrowed and put into Graystone Court. Consequently, all of Farnham's fortune was represented in the unfinished hotel.

A little later came the news of his death in Mexico. Again and again Graystone Court was offered for sale. From one hundred thousand dollars, something like its real value, it was marked down to eighty thousand, sixty thousand, and at last offered at sheriff's sale for fifty thousand, and refused.

All this I had learned from the stenographer in the office of Ward Thompson, the lawyer. For that stenographer was Vera South, my fiancee.

Dismissing the oppression of Graystone Court and its destiny from my mind, I breathed deeply of the cool air, and hurried on. Two blocks away, at a boarding-house, my sweetheart lived. The fact that she lived so close to Graystone Court had been responsible, six months before, for my meeting with her.

One afternoon in fall I found her leaning over the railing around an area way along one side of the Court, much distressed. Her pet dog had fallen into the depression, and was scratching and crying in a vain effort to get out. I was down in a moment and had handed him up. Then we were drawn together by that magnetism which at some time in every life whispers sweet things in the ear. A chance meeting or two followed, a few brief conversations—we learned of our mutual loneliness—and banished it.

Of course, when Miss South found I was watchman at the place, which was under the general charge of her employer, this helped matters, for it had given us something to talk about. Her knowledge of Graystone Court and its history surprised me. This all had come to her in the routine of her daily work for Thompson, I took it.

We did not linger at Vera's boarding-house that night. Despite the fact that the good landlady was almost a mother to my girl, who was quite alone in the world, and gave her a good home, we did not care for the boarding-house parlor, which was always a place of ill-assorted personalities and painful scrutiny. Tonight, as frequently, we [illegible] roll and movie.

Our homeward way lay past Graystone Court. As it loomed above our conversation lagged. Vera seemed to shrink from the place. How satisfying it was that she should be enough concerned about me to feel the dreariness of my barren home!

I gazed at the place from habit. Suddenly my fingers tightened upon her arm. Down the central hall on the second floor bobbed a will-o'-the-wisp. A man was walking up there carrying a light!

"Some one's inside!" I pointed. "I thought I saw somebody just as I was leaving. I must take you home and hurry back!"

"No"—she grasped me hard—"I don't want you to go in there."

"But I must. I'm responsible!"

"They might——"

"They couldn't hurt me. I'm a regular policeman, with a badge and a gun!"

The light disappeared as we gazed. Then it glimmered on the floor above. I knew the way it was going. But what was its destination? And what was its carrier's purpose?

I tried the front door of Graystone Court. It was locked. Quickly I drew my keys and opened it. I was forgetting all about Vera in my excitement. She was at my side in a thrice. "Let me go!" she begged. "If there's danger I want to be there, too!"

I turned, for once wishing she were far away. I must guard this place which meant my job, and incidentally the money which was keeping me in school. For if Thompson should find I had been away when prowlers came——

"Robbie," Vera was saying, "I'm going, too. It's an adventure, you know, like the one where the girl in the picture show goes into the cave."

I kissed her, and, with an arm around her to guard against missteps, drew her inside. "I'll light the gas," I said, "and put you safely in my room while I go and see about this."

A white glare flooded the room. From the drawer I drew a long six-shooter. When it was time to shut Vera in my room she was outside.

"I'm not going to be shut up in that room," she announced. "I'm going with you."

What can you do with a woman? "Come on, then, and get beat up or shot," I said sharply.

"If you get it, I want it, too," she maintained.

I examined the revolver and felt glad that I had recently polished my badge. Now to light my lantern. It was gone! The intruders in the building must have taken it. I found and lighted a bit of candle.

"Tiptoe, now!" I ordered sternly, determined to make her feel like the timid follower of a lion-hearted hero, but really somewhat scared myself.

On the second floor we paused to listen. It was not pleasant there in the chilly darkness with the feeling that something might reach out and grab us at any time. Vera was gripping my hand and trembling. I would have rejoiced in her scare to pay her for her insubordination if I had not felt very creepy.

Sounds of footsteps pounded two floors above. We heard them thru the airshaft, close at hand. I shielded the light, and we went up two more stories. Every step cracked like a pistol. At the top of the second flight we looked across the airshaft and grasped each other involuntarily. Two men, with my lantern, were in the room opposite.

Fearful of being seen I put out the candle. We watched icily and motionless. They kept their backs to us. Try as we might we could not see their faces. If they returned they would have to pass the place where we stood. I must get Vera in the clear and then advance. I determined that we should steal forward to one of the rooms at the front of the hotel, into whose windows we could dimly see the electric light streaming. These would be splendid windows out of which to blow one's police whistle for help!

Across the all too creaky floor we glided to one of the front rooms. It was not an altogether courageous proceeding for a commissioned arm of the law. But I found consolation in the general indorsement of "Safety First," and recalled with a warm feeling the nice things said about men who take care of the ladies in great crises. I raised one of the windows and placed Vera beside it.

"Stay here," I whispered, "and, if you hear me call, 'Bring in the boys, Bill,' blow that whistle like six o'clock. Your name isn't Bill, but you may attract somebody whose name is."

It was nice strategy. I took a kiss for reward, and stole forth against the enemy. They were across the hall, a few doors down, near the airshaft. The door to the room containing them had glass in it. I blessed the unknown who, at some time in the past, had bumped this glass, chipping out a fine peephole. Personally I should like to have gone back, got Vera, and fled the place. Officially I had to advance. I never knew before how nice it is to be at the front of a policeman's badge, where the public is, saying, "Go right in, nice little officer, and get shot. That's what we're paying you for!"

I was just in front of the door, and before I could peep in, I heard voices. Some one said, "Forty thousand. You make me laugh! You know how much money went into the place."

"Yes, and I know how much won't come out of it. Every dealer in town refused fifty for it."

"How do I know?"

There was bitter emphasis on the word "I," and a pause. The other man spoke again, and seemed much hurt.

"Come, Henry, be reasonable. You don't know how things have been. This forty thousand was all the place would bring. I haven't the papers to show you. I'd expected you to come to the office later. But I've brought the cash along, according to your message. It's all I got. Can't you take my word?"

"Your word! It made me put every cent I could grab into this d—d tombstone. Your word—it ruined me!"

I was leaning, my eye to the hole in the glass. Something extraordinary made me gasp. Once, at the office of Ward Thompson, where I had called for Vera, I had studied the delicate, sad lines of a face in a picture on the wall. Vera told me who it was. There was that sad, delicate face now looking straight at the door. Henry Farnham, who built Graystone Court, was not dead in Mexico. He was alive, and in that room talking to Ward Thompson, his lawyer!

My chances for remaining in the constabulary seemed slight. They had entered with me away from the switch. But stay! Perhaps they had wanted to escape me. This meeting must be a secret one, if such a place as Graystone Court and the night season were selected. But why meet secretly? I soon learned.

"Ward," Farnham was saying, "you've been my attorney for years, and think you know all my business. But you don't. I've debtors in this town who'd make that forty thousand look like fifteen cents if they knew I had it. I insisted on meeting you here because I can't afford to be seen in public. I"—he said it bitterly—"I am supposed to be dead. The money you got for Graystone Court is for a purpose. It shan't go for anything else, I swear it. I'm going to deliver it. Then I'm going to slink away to the West"—he coughed with distress—"and spend my last few days in the sun."

Thompson was nodding. He thought matters nearing settlement. He was mistaken.

"But," Farnham continued, "I couldn't accept anything like forty thousand for payment—in full. I'll take it, and give you a receipt for that much. But you've fleeced me enough. Sixty thousand dollars is my price for this building. It's got to come, Ward. I don't want it for myself—I haven't long. But——"

"I know," Thompson sneered, "none of us want money for ourselves! We're all working for charity. Now, listen, Henry. Here's your forty thousand dollars in cash for a receipt in full. You can't get the intrinsic value out of this building. I know it seems hard. But what are you going to do when they won't bid more? Here's the money. I swear it's every cent I got. Will you receipt in full, or do I take the money back to my office?"

"Take back—take my money back?" There was a hard aroused note in Farnham's voice. He moved forward. I heard him say, "Give me that!" Then Thompson warned, "Henry—Henry!"

There was a grab, a scuffle, and panting, disjointed words. The men had come together. I heard them strain and push. Then there was an awful chuckling gasp. The glass cr[illegible]ed from the door, and out backed [illegible] Thompson. He bent to the floor. Out of his arms he laid the limp form of Henry Farnham. He rushed back into the room and got the lantern. Then he shed its yellow rays over the pallid face.

Presently he breathed a long "Hum!" I knew he meant, "Dead."

The lantern's rays shifted to the clasped fingers of Farnham. Inside them, in the grip of death, was a thin package. Thompson placed his fingers over those of the dead man and began to pry.

A while ago I had trembled in fear of the unknown. But now before me was the known, and circumstances made my course clear. The drama of it had rather subordinated me. I said, perhaps a little stagily, "One moment, Mr. Thompson! Don't you think the coroner had better do that?"

He noticed me for the first time, there beside him, holding my revolver in plain sight. I know it isn't the conventional way to approach an employer, but I had heard enough to convince me Thompson needed watching.

His nervous look, as he heard my voice, changed to one of insolent assurance, as he recognized me. "Not at all," he blustered. "He was in the act of giving me this when he dropped dead."

So that was to be his story!

"I heard all that passed between you in that room," I said.

He did not seem to pay any attention, but knelt intent upon getting the package. The fingers opened after a moment, and as he started to rise, the money in his hand, he saw me still standing there. "You may go," he growled. "I don't need you."

My gun was pointed at his head. "Lay down that money," I commanded.

"Drop that gun, you fool," he snarled, "or you won't be working for me!"

"Mr. Thompson," I reminded, "I was working for the owner of this building under your directions. The owner lies there dead. I heard, and I know you've no more right to his property than I."

His pale features weakened into a sickly smile. "Well," he said, "if that's the way you look at it, I'll humor you."

As he bent to lay the package back, I lowered the gun. He was close beside me, and from a crouching position he sprang upon me, grabbing with both hands the arm which held the revolver. By terrible contortion he forced the gun from my hand. It fell under my feet and I kicked it ahead of me as I tore away and plunged toward the package of money.

Half stumbling over the body, I recovered the gun, seized the package from the floor, and straightened before him. The strong words I ripped out in excitement and the anger in my face must have made Ward Thompson afraid he was going to be shot. With a wild shout he came at me with the lantern. As he rushed, I dodged, keeping him covered. The flaming lantern passed my head like a meteor, plunging thru the window into the airshaft.

As light faded I could hear him quite close to me panting in the darkness. He brushed me, and fearful that he should grasp and overpower me, I aimed the gun at where his feet seemed to be, and drew the trigger.

Twice a red flash belched noise and lead at the floor. Darkness and smoke swallowed my assailant. But his cries of fear and retreating footsteps told me he was leaving as fast as he could stumble thru the darkness. Now he was at the stairs and going down precipitously.

I pursued him as far as the stairs, and when I knew he was out of range, took another shot, just for luck. Then I hurried back to Vera. She was a clammy bit of humanity, speechless with terror.

"I didn't hear you call for Bill, and I thought you were shot," she sobbed.

"I'm all right, but we need an officer named Bill, or Oscar, or something right quick."

I felt my pocket to make sure the package was safe, and then with the candle relighted, we started downstairs. I told Vera of shooting at a couple of prowlers, not wanting to frighten her with the story of a dead man, or tell her about the part played by her employer.

We were out of the building and turning into the street where Vera lived, when a policeman hurried past. I was about to stop and tell him of what had happened, when another bluecoat hove into sight. At his heels trailed Thompson. His face lit up with evil eagerness as he saw me.

"There he is!" he cried. "That's the fellow, officer!"

"Yes, officer," I put in, "that's the fellow I'm looking for!"

One of the policemen had me by the shoulder. "Have you this man's money?" he inquired.

"I'll tell the judge all about it," I said, "and you'd better bring him along, too." Thompson strenuously objected, and when I called the policeman's attention to this, the leading officer decided to call a patrol.

I was glad they weren't going to take us on a street car. It was fine to think of Thompson in a patrol. He was known widely, while I was a nobody. But Vera——

I was framing a lie to get her out and have them send her home, when one of the officers asked, "This young lady—does she know anything about it?"

I had started to say something when she interrupted, "I was there when it happened." She spoke as if she wanted to ride in a patrol wagon!

"Then you will have to go along," said the policeman.

I looked reproof at Vera. Why did she force herself into such an unenviable position? The strange look on her face held me spellbound. She was gazing at Thompson as if she knew what he had attempted and despised him for it. How true to me and my interests she was, I reflected. Thompson had started in surprise at noticing her presence. He offered to call a taxi to take her to the police station. She declined coldly. I could see that both of us would be needing new jobs.

There was a rush thru the cool air in the patrol, two luminous globes beside some steps, and we were shown into the presence of a gray-haired man, with stars upon his coat collar.

The policemen explained the affair as far as they were able, and then the police captain said, "Now, Mr. Thompson, let us hear your side of this."

"Certainly," Thompson began, with the air of an injured lamb bleating to the shepherd. "Tonight I was on my way home, carrying by chance the money received this afternoon for the sale of Graystone Court. I got a report that this man, my watchman at the Court, was neglecting his duty. I stopped at the building and found him away, as reported. He returned, pretended to think me a robber, took the forty thousand I had, and drove me away with a gun."

Well, of all——! What did he mean by such a lie? I learned later. He was chancing everything on getting immediate possession of the money.

His lie nearly choked me, but I held in. Without further parley I drew the package, and laid it before the captain. He opened it and disclosed forty crisp thousand-dollar bills.

"Whose money is this?" he asked, as if a little puzzled.

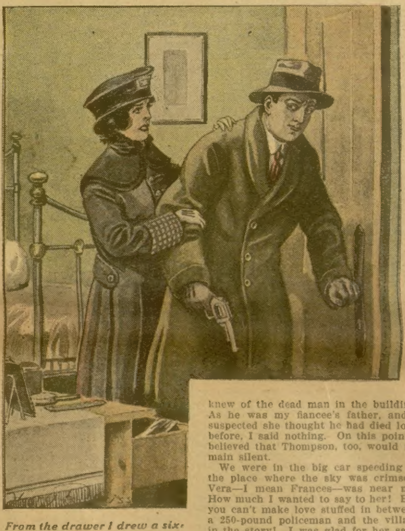
"It is in my charge to deliver to the Henry Farnham heirs," explained Thompson.

There was a gasp beside me. Vera South, her face ashen, was pointing at Thompson.

"It's a lie!" she cried. "He's trying to steal the money. Henry Farnham left no heirs. I'm his stenographer, and I've heard him say so dozens of times!"

"I'm holding it while we search for heirs," protested Thompson. "This girl is crazy."

I almost thought so myself. For Vera had wriggled away from me and was beside the police captain trembling from head to foot. She turned, pointing at Thompson, choked with emotion. This was a girl other than the Vera I knew, a girl consumed by some mysterious impulse.



From the drawer I drew a six-shooter.

From her purse she drew a locket, one I never had seen before. With shaking hands she put it before the captain, begging him to read. He blinked for a while as we all stood around like statues.

Then his voice came clear and even: "From Ward Thompson to his little Frances Farnham."

I gasped in bewilderment.

Vera, a wonderful intensity in her face, was crying: "He says Henry Farnham had no heirs? Ask him to whom he gave this locket fifteen years ago!"

The accusing finger still on Thompson, she gasped, "You don't remember the child you used to gain your way to Henry Farnham's confidence and his money! You didn't know that child grew up with its mother, who was deserted by Henry Farnham for a woman you introduced, that the mother died of a broken heart, and the daughter, under another name, came to be your stenographer, to watch you—and to wait!"

And this after all they say about women and secrets! Never had I suspected. And Thompson—he was a rag. I could see, as he lay there pale in that chair, that it was a hard evening even for his re-enforced conscience.

The silence was as yet unbroken when, from a gong on the wall, there came a clatter. The captain listened, counting. He consulted a book, and then asked a question or two over his 'phone.

He hung up and looked at us thoughtfully as he said, "There seems to be quite a fire at Graystone Court."

I think Ward Thompson was glad he was sitting down. He looked like a man convalescing or growing very ill, and I think it was the latter.

"Until the origin of this fire is discovered you may all consider yourselves under detention," said the captain.

As he spoke the bell sounded again, and he excused himself and stepped out into the hall.

I couldn't help asking, "Mr. Thompson, do you think the police will construe throwing a lantern thru a window and starting a fire as accident or just plain arson?"

I knew my job was gone. From the look he gave me I feared for my salary to date.

The captain had returned. "I've got to go to the fire at once," he announced. "As all of you are interested you may go along in my machine. Jump in, two of you officers, and see that none of these folks attempt to stray away."

Nobody save Thompson and myself knew of the dead man in the building. As he was my fiancee's father, and I suspected she thought he had died long before, I said nothing. On this point I believed that Thompson, too, would remain silent.

We were in the big car speeding to the place where the sky was crimson. Vera—I mean Frances—was near me. How much I wanted to say to her! But you can't make love stuffed in between a 250-pound policeman and the villain in the story! I was glad for her sake she was an heiress, hopeful that she never would know of her father's sad end, and pleased that I had popped the question when I thought her nothing but a poor stenographer.

Thru a living river of red fire trucks, white-faced people, and spark-spewing engines, we sirened our way. Leaving the machine we filed inside the roped-off space. I felt for my keys. No need for them. Men with red axes had beaten down the doors. My books, my few belongings, the wonderful picture upon which I had gazed at the beginning of this night of thrills, all lay on the sidewalk warping in the heat. I picked up what I could, and then looked up.

Graystone Court stood like a giant grate thru whose bars dripped sparkling fire. The windows puffed red into the smoke, and the flames danced like smirking demons over the gray walls, heating them white-hot. Water sizzled against the stones, but failed to get inside. It became steam in the face of that fiery breath. The great airshaft was a colossal chimney fed by the store of wood which had been drying for years. The wind fanned the flames, and the giant bonfire leaped to heaven with a roar that defied all the fire engines in the world. My poor old lantern surely had started something!

The firemen worked now merely to keep the flames from spreading. Henry Farnham's body must have been at the very center of a white-hot crucible. Floor after floor went down, and the sparks rained out like meteors. His very bones were burning, and never would be found. The great unfinished building was his funeral pyre. I understood now he must have known that his daughter lived, and that it must have been her for whom he intended the forty thousand dollars.

I thanked the unseen that I had been able to carry out Farnham's last wish. There was a dampness in my eyes not engendered of the smoke and heat. For me to bestow was the love and protection which Henry Farnham forgot until too late. Frances was walking toward me. She seemed distressed. Had she found out? Pictures of her grief, in such case, were before me.

Fearfully I asked, "What is it, dear?"

"Oh, Robbie," she wept, "your chiffonier has all the paint scorched off!"

Weeks have passed. The bar examination is just behind me, and marriage just ahead. I have joined the firm of Frances' attorneys. They had been planning to take the building from Thompson, with Frances as star witness, when the lawyer suddenly made the sale of the building. This would have interfered and complicated matters, had not our night of adventure brought things to a satisfactory end.

My first case was won when I was successful in establishing Frances' right to the forty thousand dollars. The transfer by Thompson of Graystone Court to the interests which purchased it had been legally finished before the building burned.

The only recourse of the unfortunate interests which purchased the building is to get restitution from Thompson. His affairs were in a bad way from speculation. That is why, after Farnham dropped dead, he tried so hard to get the cash. After his arrest, at the instigation of the new owners of the building, who blamed him for the fire, he gave bond, and his bondsmen, too, will have something to say to him—when they are able to locate him.

* * *

Dry Fodder.

"I felt awfully ashamed when they asked me if I drank water with my meals and I said yes, and then I was the only one who drank any water," said Mabel to her parents. "If I had known in time that they never drank anything with their meals I would have said no, and been like the others. I felt behind the times, and lonesome and wicked and outcast."

"You needn't worry," said Mabel's pa. "You were used to drinking water and you needed it with your dinner and you were right to have it. The people of the family in which you were a guest had the advantage of you. They could sneak out into the kitchen on some pretext and get a drink if they wanted it. But you, as the guest, couldn't. I expect they did have occasion to go to the kitchen from time to time, didn't they?"

"Why, yes, Roberta and her mother both did, and I'm pretty sure that they took a drink while they were out there."

"Ah! I told you. When people inform you that they never drink water with their meals don't you believe it. They may not bring it to the table, but this omission is no sign.

"My mother once belonged to an organization that advocated fasting. They would fast from Saturday night to Monday morning—a long stretch. I didn't belong, so I had to eat.

"They thought it was terrible when I ate, so that I used to do it somewhat secretly.

"One Sunday night they were all sitting up as melancholy as possible and as hungry as a planing mill when I very quietly went out into the kitchen and started to boil coffee. Ha! That coffee hadn't permeated the air very many seconds before I heard a cough outside. There was one of the main fasters just outside the kitchen window!

"'Sir!' he said, 'I am ill. Will you please pass me a cup of that coffee? I think it will help me some.'

"He hadn't finished his cup before another mournful gent appeared to ask for coffee. I transformed the whole bunch to eaters instead of fasters. But they all wanted it to be kept dark.

"Let me tell you that vegetarians should never come around when I am frying bacon in the woods on a cool morning after a cool ten hours beneath the blankets outdoors. I could convert any vegetarian at such a time.

"These water abstainers, when they see a big tall bubbly glass before some one else, can't stand it. They remember how good that water used to taste. Get a big tall glass and set it before yourself with a few drops of sweat on the outside and watch them fall!"

Strong Jacob of Eden

Or, The Wilderness Waif

By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER IX.

JACOB LEE was in the cook's department. He had gone as he went to other places, and that was to familiarize himself with details. Father Caleb was always delighted to see his new assistant take up all matters so zealously, for it promised well for his usefulness in the future. The good man even had mental vision of the coming years when he would no longer be with the living, and Jacob would rule over Eden Mission. Now, while the chief missionary and the hunters were calling on the Sciorras, the assistant was in the kitchen.

The duty of building fires fell upon worthy Thomas, and he did it well, with the combined help of fuel, industry, and grumbling. Now, about to begin, he suddenly stopped short.

"Just my luck!" he ejaculated. "Plenty of oak, but not enough soft stuff to get a start. Never did have the faculty of keepin' plenty of kindlin's on hand. Got to go to the woods, I suppose—unless there may be pine in that barrel. Most everything there. Found a baby's rattle and a toothbrush on the top of it, t'other day."

Jacob, who greatly lacked humor, watched gravely while Thomas dived deep in the barrel.

"A few fishbones," added the cook. "Shin-bone of a bear. Piece of rock with shiny mica in it. They won't burn well. Oh! this is better. Bits of bark and a few splinters—just about enough. Hallo! here's a paper, and that's something scarce hereabouts. It's a printed poster. What's it all about?"

He went closer to the light.

"Five hundred dollars reward!" he read slowly. "That's a pile of money. Reward for the arrest of Barrington Clayes, alias John Pugh. Charged with the murder of one Absalom Randall. Dated Moundway, California. Wish I could earn that reward—bah! the paper is two years old!"

Jacob came forward quietly, his face calm and his manner composed.

"You seem to have kindling enough," he said steadily. "Did you say you were in a hurry?"

"Great hurry, sir. I've never heard of Barrington Clayes. It says he's about 40 years old, tall and heavily built, and of great muscular strength. Black beard, abundant hair, serious-looking, has a long, dark record, and is dangerous when stirred up. That's what I learn by skimming it over."

"Your fire, Thomas, does not progress rapidly," Jacob reminded.

"I must attend to it."

The cook dropped the placard, which was at once picked up by the new assistant, who began to read quickly. Thomas hurried and soon had the fire going. When he was done he turned and looked along the floor.

"What did I do with that reward paper?" he asked.

"I think," Jacob explained deliberately, "that I saw it in the fire, but it is now ashes."

"I don't remember putting it there, but I sometimes do stupid things. Well, it was two years old. What did it say? About 40 years old, tall, strong, thick hair and black beard. Built something like you, tho you have no beard."

"Shall I fill your kettle, Thomas?"

"Oh, I'll do that. What was his name? Bartholomew Clayes? Something like that. This is not California, but a hunted man could come up here."

"Your kindlings seem to have been sufficient, Thomas," remarked the assistant. "I feel sure you will supply us with one of your famous dishes. It is a great art to cook well, but you succeed finely."

The compliment reached the cook's weakest point, and he bustled about and briefly forgot the paper. It might not have gone from his mind so quickly had he known that it was not he but Jacob had put it into the fire. An Indian child came to say that Father Caleb's wife wished to consult the assistant, and Thomas was left alone. Presently, wanting the barrel out of his way, he was about to move it, but paused, stared inside, and lifted something.

"Oh, another copy of that poster printin'. Five hundred dollars reward! I'll hang on to this one, and take it to Father Caleb."

His present work was to prepare broth for the forest waif, and he laid the handbill down. Until the broth was ready he gave close attention, and then the old lure of the poster came again. He looked where he had left it, but it was gone, and a long search failed to bring it to light.

"Mighty odd that both on them whisked out o' sight," he muttered. "Hang the luck! But this is a missionary house."

Standing by the window, a little later, he saw the chief missionary and Mark and Ben return to the glade, and was impressed by their looks and manner.

"Got some worry on their minds, I reckon," he commented indifferently.

The persons mentioned, just back from Sciorra village, were not in indifferent mood, and ten minutes later Father Caleb summoned Jacob Lee and Captain Gregory to his presence. Then, with Mark and Ben at his side, he spoke seriously.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we are home, and tho I am sure we have no cause for apprehensions, there is news I must of necessity tell to you, since one question must be asked of all here. Something was found near our buildings, and we want to understand it fully."

He then told of the bloodstain discovery by Mark and Ben, of the latter's investigation, and the claim that a young Indian had been slain where the blood was found.

"Now," he added, "can either of you two gentlemen, Jacob or the captain, give me any light upon the affair?"

Both men denied knowledge of the whole matter.

"We three," pursued the missionary, indicating the hunters, "have been to the Indian village for facts, and you shall hear everything, but first, a word of explanation.

"A hundred years ago or thereabouts a few Snake redmen appeared in this section, and settled here. Why they broke away from their tribe I do not know. They adopted the name of Sciorra, which is a modification of the Chinook word for panther. At some later time they divided, certain of them locating south of the Columbia, and some remaining north of the stream. It is with the latter, hardy, but peaceful fellows under a chief named Bending Willow, that I do my humble work. Those below river are, I am sorry to admit, hasty of temper—a bit savage, I may say—and always uncertain. Their chief is one Red Beaver, so called.

"We went to their village because Sam Reed had learned that a young brave called Leaping Panther had been slain in this glade—murdered, as his companions claim. He was the son of a redman known as Heart-That-Is-Strong. The latter is a Crow Indian who united with the Sciorras some years back, and he is—well, a little impetuous."

Ben caught Jacob's eye and softly whispered a few words.

"A mighty dangerous man, a cutthroat."

"From other young redmen," pursued Father Caleb, "we heard the story. Four of them came in a canoe to near the mission, and then Leaping Panther landed and came right here to speak with me. When he later failed to rejoin his companions, they came here, too, found him dead, stabbed, and then bore his body to the canoe and to the village. The question is, who murdered him?"

Ben Reed cleared his throat loudly.

"Perhaps I should add," said the missionary, with a glance at Ben, "that both these worthy hunters doubt that the tale told to us was strictly truthful."

"I doubt most mightily," Ben asserted.

"Be that as it may," Father Caleb resumed, "we found the lower Sciorras much vexed and excited, and they really talked threateningly, but when I reasoned with them and promised full investigation, they listened to arguments, and the whole matter lost its unfriendly air. They are rude, untutored men, but not deaf to reason."

Jacob turned to gaze upon Ben.

"A hot interview," the latter said softly. "Looked like we would be butchered, then and there, for them chaps are real bloodthirsty warriors, but they simmered down at the end. Still, they are liable to come here soon and kill the whole lot of us."

The new assistant nodded comprehendingly.

"Now," said Father Caleb, benignly, "we want to learn the facts so as to meet the moderation of the redmen with like justice on our own part. I fear that one of the Sciorras above the river may accidentally have slain the young brave—it is certain that none of our own people did it—and dares not confess, but I hope some of our mission party may be able to cast light upon the matter. I am about to question all hands."

He moved away, serious but without fears, and Gregory followed, but Jacob stayed and looked critically at the hunters.

"What," he asked quietly, "is the truth of the visible part of this matter?"

"First," Ben answered, "that chap that was killed was always a scamp. I don't doubt that he was killed here, but them who was with him that night lied. Questioned by Father Caleb and me, they tangled themselves up on details. Good Caleb can't see that part, but Mark and I do. They sartainly lied, but that don't explain what the truth was. The worst of it all is that the peace the missionary believes in is a humbug. Them men of Red Beaver's are hotheads, and as for Heart-That-Is-Strong, he's wild with fury and desire for revenge. If he breaks loose, what will happen at this mission?"

"Cannot you impress Father Caleb with the danger?" Jacob asked.

"Not a bit."

"I admit that I know little about Indians, but your report is such as to distress me. Here, we have women and children——"

He broke off and ended with a sober shaking of his head.

"Frankly," said Mark, "we are worried. This mission has no arms, and practically no fighting men of its own. Ben and I will stay while danger threatens. We count upon you in a crisis."

"If it comes, I shall surely do my part. Then we have Captain Gregory and——"

"Gregory!" sniffed Ben. "A fighter, a bold man, a chap of experience, but I've plainly told Father Caleb that Gregory is all for himself and as little to be trusted as a snake. True, I can't prove that, but I can see it. Do you admire him, sir?"

"Perhaps," said Jacob, hesitatingly, "it would be just as well if we are never compelled to trust our fortunes to Donald Gregory's honesty."

"Right, just right!" Ben exclaimed. "That's the sort he is, an' we can't depend on him in any ruction we may have. Once a rascal, always a rascal. Never knew it to fail."

At that moment Father Caleb's wife appeared and spoke briefly, and when she walked on the men separated. Jacob moved away, his head bent and his expression thoughtful and disturbed. Going in this mood he did not notice that he was nearing the trees, nor, when he had entered among them, that he was there. Gradually, however, his brow cleared and he seemed more at peace, for the soothing influence of nature penetrated his mind, even tho not openly realized.

Unconsciously pursuing a half-circle, he walked for some minutes, and then came to a sudden, almost violent, halt. Judith Ashwood was before him.

She sat where two trees, deformed by adverse pressure years before, had crossed trunks and formed a rustic seat, and sitting, was fast asleep. Her head rested against one of the trees, and her expression was peaceful. The light of the sun, but not its glaring rays, sifted thru the foliage above and fell kindly and caressingly upon her. Jacob, at halt, gazed upon the picture, his lips parted, his eyes eloquent, his face strangely expressive of emotion.

Judith was poetry, romance and womanhood blended in a harmonious whole, and the new assistant was bound to the spot. Vaguely feeling that he ought to retreat, his feet refused to do their duty. He stayed. A bird flitted past and aroused him a little. He moved at last, and spoke softly.

"Judith!"

Wrapped in slumber, she did not hear.

"Judith, I would speak with you!"

The tone was too low to awaken any sleeper, and as she remained unconscious, Jacob gave over the attempt. He advanced a step, hesitated, and was uncertain. Then, irresistibly drawn, he moved forward slowly like one under a spell until he stood by her side. Cautiously he put forth his hand and touched her golden hair, only to recoil a moment later.

Troubled by his rashness, he would then have withdrawn, but a more active breath of wind drifted thru the trees, and the golden lock was blown directly into his hand. He let it rest there, touched the gift of the winds with his free fingers, and, his face tremulous with some deep feeling, was unable to draw away from the lock.

The grave missionary was off his guard; he was no longer self-possessed, self-reliant, and no longer the calm and inscrutable master of his fortunes. swept by profound emotion, he delayed with the feast of mind and soul. Perhaps companionship with the present was interwoven with memories of the past, but rare gentleness and singular reverence dominated the situation.

His empty hand rose and pressed hard upon his brow, and it may be that the touch cleared his mind. He sighed, dropped the tress, and tried to throw off the dangerous mood of weakness.

He had suddenly become in haste to go, but a new temptation came upon him. He bent until his face was near her own. Reverentially he pressed his lips to her brow. The touch, or, perhaps, an inward sense, aroused Judith. She opened her eyes, saw Jacob, and knew what had awakened her.

She sprang to her feet, her cheeks suffused with unwonted color, her eyes full of indignation.

CHAPTER X.

JACOB stood abashed. His eyes were downcast, his expression gloomy and sorrowful. His massive figure had lost its erectness, and his shoulders sagged as if power had left muscles and spine. Mentally and physically he stood blasted by the madness of his rash action and Judith's indignation.

"Forgive me!" he uttered humbly.

"Mr. Lee!" she exclaimed.

"I beg your pardon for an unworthy man!" he added, beset with consternation and shame. "I lost myself; I was not conscious of what I did. I deeply regret that I have given you cause for anger."

His manner was an argument stronger than words. To see this man of great strength and calm demeanor thus abashed, his figure drooping and his expression full of distress, was so strange that Judith was disarmed of some part of her resentment without knowing why—her mind did not catch the process, nor, indeed, her reason the fact.

"Do you realize," she began, and then lost power of speech in a wilderness of words that would not shape themselves for coherent utterance.

"I realize all!" he cried. "You condemn me, and justly, but I do assure you that I acted without sensing what I did. It was the madness of mental oblivion. Believe me, I am not seeking for excuses to clear myself, for I only tell the exact truth. For the moment my brain was the same as paralyzed, and I was blind to my crime. Miss Judith, forgive me!"

She wondered afterward that the stronger force of her resentment passed so easily, but when she wondered Jacob was not present. Now he was before her, and she saw the bowed figure and contrite face, and heard the husky voice. These things carried weight that was not to be resisted.

"I think," she replied tremulously, "that perhaps you meant no harm."

"In saying this you but do me justice. More, if you will overlook a moment of weakness you shall have no cause to reproach me in the future. Judith Ashwood is as far above me as the mountain above the plain. No, do not object to my comparison—I know you, and know myself. Yes, and the path destiny has appointed me to tread. I will tread it firmly in the future, and my feet will not slip."

"I am sure you mean me well."

"If occasion offers, let me be tried. Look! I am much older than you—my years are past forty. Every year of life is a gap that has full meaning, and if my nature remains unchanged my reason has ripened with the only valuable teacher, experience. Your class is that of youth, while mine is that of——"

"Developed mental power," she interrupted kindly.

"It must be admitted that such power belongs only to those who can count years of experience. Before 25 man's brain is merely developing—but I wander from the subject. I have the years to see clearly, but let it rest at that. There is another feature I offer for your consideration. My past life was one of solitude, even when I had many companions. I have been shut out from what is most prized by men of worth. Home and true friends have not been mine. I have been bound to the rock."

She did not understand, but, seeing him deep in reflection, she remained silent and sympathetically attentive. He stirred suddenly and cast off the wandering mood.

"Miss Judith, if you can find it possible to forgive me I shall look upon your forbearance as an act of the utmost importance. My usefulness at Eden Mission depends upon my having a good reputation. I have put that reputation in jeopardy by the madness of a weak moment, but if you can pass my folly by I shall be glad—oh, so glad to remain at the mission and work side by side with Father Caleb in efforts to do good, to help mankind, to redeem my past."

"Mr. Lee," Judith gently replied, "I feel sure that your past is not to your discredit——"

"You do not know——"

"Neither is it necessary that I should, unless you feel that you must tell. Feet will slip, and we are all victims of our environments, but there is forgiveness for all slips and hope for all right intentions. Mr. Lee, you have been most considerate of my feelings since you came to the mission, and I will forget everything else and look only to the future. May Heaven grant kindly help to all who thirst to make the coming days and years free from blame."

"Amen!" he said deeply.

"When we meet next," she added, "this interview will be forgotten. We shall be only companion workers in Father Caleb's field, and friends. Believe me, I have no fears!"

She meant it then, forgetful of the fact that the coming of Jacob Lee to the mission had brought her fear so keen that it was terror. Now, she thought only of the Jacob she had known since his arrival, the Jacob of the present moment.

Gravely attentive, he inclined his head a little.

"I will look to the future," he returned. "It is the rock of refuge, the earthly land of promise, the golden hope of life. Yes, and when each day dawns I will remember that the fact that I have a future is your gift to me. I thank you for your charity. Now I will go!"

For the first time he smiled, a faint yet an eloquent smile, and, bending his head, turned and walked away. The bushes quickly concealed him, but, going, he left a part of his secret behind him. Once obscure events of the recent past added to what had just happened made a strange fact clear to Judith. Jacob Lee loved her!

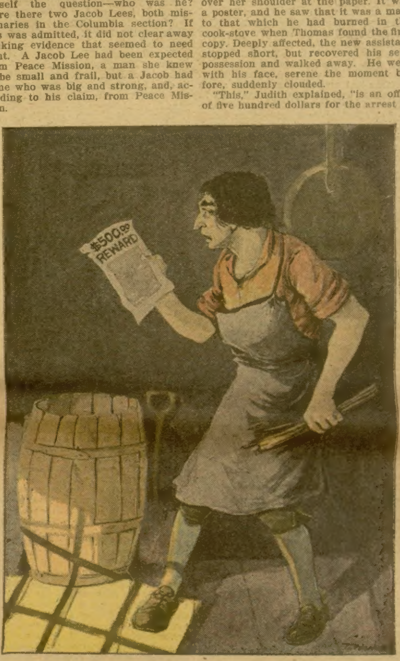
In his presence she had been composed, but when his steps no longer sounded her mood changed. Agitation came upon her. The interview had been more than one of words, yet the words had been deeply impressive. Reviewing the last few minutes, she gave no thought to what had awakened her from sleep, for other things clamored for attention.

When she heard that Jacob Lee was coming to the mission she expected recognition, accusation, and disgrace. When he arrived he had not been the Jacob she once knew, and nothing unpleasant had beset her. The stern judge had not appeared, but a disciple of humility. Now he had dwelt upon his unworthiness and her great worth. She remembered Peace Mission and shivered.

"What," she murmured, "would he think of me if he knew?"

If he knew, if others knew—and Sandy Murch held her secret in the hollow of his hand. Positive that the gnarled man was only keeping quiet because he was still hopeful of blackmailing her, she looked forward to the revelation with dread. When Sandy spoke she would be cast from the high position to which the new assistant had assigned her.

Realizing, presently, that it was useless to dwell upon miseries that had not yet fallen upon her, she turned her thoughts to Jacob again, and found him a prolific and perplexing study. More than once, before then, she asked herself the question—who was he? Were there two Jacob Lees, both missionaries in the Columbia section? If this was admitted, it did not clear away striking evidence that seemed to need light. A Jacob Lee had been expected from Peace Mission, a man she knew to be small and frail, but a Jacob had come who was big and strong, and, according to his claim, from Peace Mission.



"Five hundred!" he read slowly. "That's a pile of money."

Here was mystery that, had she not thought well of the new assistant from the first, would have carried dark suggestion. Possibilities sprang up from this clash of facts that were almost endless, but she had tried to brush everything away by theorizing that the real Jacob, unable to come, had sent a substitute.

This did not seem believable, and it suggested several points that were in challenge, some of which were not complimentary to the frail Jacob, who had always been so critical in judging right and wrong that he was sometimes harsh when he aimed only to be just.

But suppose the real Jacob had no hand in the coming of the big man? What then? And an endless train of possibilities lay back of the question. Who and what was the Jacob now at Eden Mission?

Judith thought until meditation became a breeder of irritation, and then rose abruptly. Inaction palled upon her. She wanted movement, and for half an hour she walked briskly, banishing the haunting mysteries. By the time she returned to the glade she was again calm and resolute.

Almost as soon as she entered among the group of buildings, an Indian servant, an old woman called Yellow Leaf, approached her, holding a sheet of paper in her hand. The squaw was bony and homely, even for one of her race, but she had been a faithful servitor ever since the mission was established. Now she smiled upon her young associate, and if the smile was not charming it was friendly.

"See!" she said. "I have found a talking-paper. It was blowing about near the edge of the woods, so I picked it up. Such valuable things must not be lost, or we shall become very poor. What does the spotted talker say?"

She had handed the paper over to Judith, and the latter saw a short, printed page with huge headlines. She ran her eyes over what was there, explaining as she read.

It happened that Jacob Lee passed by then, and unconsciously sent a glance over her shoulder at the paper. It was a poster, and he saw that it was a mate to that which he had burned in the cook-stove when Thomas found the first copy. Deeply affected, the new assistant stopped short, but recovered his self-possession and walked away. He went with his face, serene the moment before, suddenly clouded.

"This," Judith explained, "is an offer of five hundred dollars for the arrest of Barrington Clayes, alias John Pugh, for the murder of one Absalom Randall. Clayes is described as being large and strong, with black hair and beard."

"Five hundred dollars!" exclaimed Yellow Leaf, with animation. "That is a lot of money. I wish I had it. Why, it would buy me a hat to wear on my head, wouldn't it?—a hat like yours and Martha's. Oh! Sister Judith, let us hunt for that Clay man."

"Unfortunately this is dated at Moundway, California, and two years ago. Before now Clayes is arrested, or has escaped completely."

"Huh!" sniffed the Indian contemptuously. "We will not follow a cold trail. The talking-paper has lived to be of no use."

She moved away, and Judith let the paper rest in her lap, forgotten by her, when she suddenly took up the study of an Indian child close at hand who had been one of the dullest pupils in the school. It had been a hard problem to know how to teach the child, and the old question again seized upon the girl's mind.

Perhaps five minutes of this study passed, and then she arose to go to the waif in the hospital. Unconscious of what she did, she thrust the poster inside her waist, and hastened to Sister Eve.

That evening, when preparing to go to her night's rest, she was wrestling with details of an arithmetical question for her eldest pupils when, removing her waist, the paper fluttered to the floor. She picked it up, went to the light, and read it again.

"Barrington Clayes, alias John Pugh," she murmured. "Wanted for murder, and with a long career of crime back of him. It is strange that some men can be so dreadful."

Noticing that the reverse side was blank, and that the sheet was clean, she saw a way of making it useful. With a pencil she went over the problem for the scholars, and finally arranged matters so that she felt sure they could understand the simplicity of arrangement.

Lying down, presently, she soon fell to considering what had happened in the woods. From that came the often-recurring perplexity—who and what was Jacob Lee of Eden Mission? Another question pressed hard upon her mind that evening.

If Jacob was an unauthorized substitute, why did not the Jacob of Peace Mission either come or send word? What had happened to him?

CHAPTER XI.

IT WAS late evening of the following day, and, with the mission square quiet and deserted, Martha Otis was watching at the bedside of Sister Eve. Few of the establishment were making as much of sacrifice for the sake of the wilderness waif as Martha made. Altho hardly advanced to middle age, nature demanded much sleep of her, and to watch as she did, when Judith was not on night duty, was a great hardship. Light as her days were being made, she slept but fitfully then, and night caused her system to demand its own.

Martha, doing her best as nurse, was beset by desire to sleep, and physically miserable because the drowsy god wooed her when she ought to keep awake. As a result, she was unreliable when she intended to be faithful and attentive.

This particular night drowsiness fell upon Martha as soon as she knew that her associates had retired. The unwelcome visitor assailed her with stubborn energy, and she rose and walked the floor softly, after making sure that the sick girl was quiet. When more awake she sat down, only to walk again later, and so repeat several times.

Presently she went to the window and looked out. The glade was lighted a trifle by dim starlight, and the various buildings were like blacker patches on the dusky web, but she could see nothing more. There was no houselight but hers, and nobody visibly moved.

"Dear me!" she mused, "I am the only person awake, and the only one, perhaps, who badly needs sleep. I wish Sister Eve would get well, for her sake—and my own. But, dear lamb, I am glad to do all I can for her. Yes, even to keep awake!"

She drummed noiselessly on the window, finding a little pleasure in scanning the area outside. Even activity of eyes helped somewhat to ward off slumber.

She was about to turn back when a human figure stole quietly into view. Like the buildings, it was only a black patch, but she saw that somebody was astir. Several rods distant, it was only a tall, moving object.

"Who can it be?" she murmured. "Perhaps Brother Jacob, for it is about his size, or possibly Captain Gregory, or maybe some of the Indians from Bending Willow's village. I hope nobody is sick over there, and in need of medicines. Ah! he looks this way—looks at this building."

For a moment the nurse believed the unknown was about to advance toward the hospital, but he sheered off and disappeared behind the structure where Strong Jacob and most of the other men slept. Martha yawned and went to look at her charge.

Sister Eve lay motionless, beset with her fever. Martha admired her beauty as she had admired before, and, as usual, her sympathy went out strongly to the patient. She studied with eyes not unskillful.

"I believe she is a mite better," the nurse mused. "Father Caleb said no, when I told him so tonight, but I still feel that she is. Anyhow, it is remarkable how her strength holds out. When she grasped at my arm, a couple of hours ago, it was a firm, hard clutch. Never before did I know a fever victim so strong. An odd fever, truly!"

She bathed the face of the girl, and then went to her chair. Sitting, she quickly found the desire for sleep more active. She resisted, tried various devices to keep awake, battled faithfully, nodded, caught herself up, rubbed her eyes, sighed, settled back, yawned audibly. After that she was still. Sleep had conquered, and she was at peace.

Half an hour passed, and a sudden stir at the bed was followed by action there. Sister Eve sat upright with a single motion, showing far more strength than even her nurses credited her with. Remaining in this position she looked around the room, tho no reason was in her eyes or face. She scrutinized the things in sight, but even when Martha was under survey she manifested neither curiosity nor realization. Blankly eying room and contents, she presently lay back with the same surprising show of strength. The nurse slept on, unseeing and unconscious.

Another half-hour slipped by quietly. Then the outer door of the hospital unclosed, and a white-robed figure passed out and was in the pale starlight. The figure halted, seemed to hesitate, then glided along with ghostlike silence. Several steps were taken heedlessly, but there was soon another halt, and the lone walker seemed to study the various buildings minutely.

Then began a circuit, a survey that took in all the mission structures, and all were given the same attention. Had Ben or Mark been there and recognized Sister Eve, the suspicion would have been aroused that she was irrationally trying to find a building connected with her past life, but trying in vain.

Off at one side the river gurgled over shore rocks and sang in the deeper channel, and its voice came to the white wanderer. She turned, walked away from the buildings, and neared the river.

She was still short of that point when another figure moved into sight from the edge of the neighboring trees—a figure tall and powerful, and plainly masculine. Had Martha been there she would have detected a strong resemblance to the dark form that had before crossed the edge of the square.

The tall walker and the white figure moved toward a common point, neither seeing the other. Sister Eve was gazing toward the river, while the tall unknown was going with head bent, as if in deep thought. Fate was bringing them together blindly.

Unknown to either, a window in the men's sleeping-house was darkened as one of the occupants came to look out. It was Ben Reed. He saw the dark square, and more. The white-robed figure suddenly caught his attention and threw him into deep wonder.

"What?" he muttered, the word long drawn out.

Then he saw the tall walker, also, but even as he did there was a cry from the point of meeting that was a woman's shrill exclamation, and the slighter figure leaped toward the stronger one.

"You stole me, you stole me!" was the accusation. "You deserted me in the forest. I will——"

She was tearing at the tall man, and as Ben came quickly to his feet a pistol shot rang out dully, the flash showing by the two.

Ben leaped from the window, started to rush forward, caught his foot on some impediment, fell heavily, but came up promptly, and then ran toward the point of excitement. Going, he saw nobody standing, but on the ground lay a white something he was not slow to understand. The tall unknown was not to be seen.

He reached the fallen person and lifted her tenderly.

"Poor little critter!" he breathed huskily.

A part of the truth was clear to him, and, wasting no time, he clasped her tightly and started back to the hospital. Altho as near to being excited as was possible to his cool nature, it was in his mind, even then, to learn more about the second person in the late drama, but his thoughts were diverted as other inmates of the mission began to appear, sparsely dressed. Aroused by the pistol shot they were coming forth from various quarters. Mark was the first to reach his companion hunter.

"What's wrong?" he demanded keenly.

"Hunt for a prowler!" Ben ordered sharply.

"Has harm been done?"

"Tell you later."

Ben hurried into the hospital. Martha Otis was awake, pale and filled with consternation. Seeing her charge in a faint or worse, she was shocked and deeply agitated by her own remissness. The hunter laid Sister Eve on the bed.

"See to her!" he directed. "If she's wounded, call Father Caleb."

He rushed out, and Jacob Lee and Captain Gregory ran to meet him.

"What has happened?" demanded Jacob.

"If an enemy has been here," added Gregory, "where has he gone?"

Ben paused and looked at them keenly. The prowler who had met the forest waif had been tall, and the two tall men of the mission were now before him. He analyzed them swiftly. Neither had any outer garments above the waist, and the new assistant was in his stocking feet and the captain barefooted. Both seemed lately from bed.

The hunter looked and was puzzled. Who had the tall prowler been? He wrestled with the problem, but gained no light then.

"Scatter and see who's to be found!" he commanded irritably.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

GRACE'S RETICENCE.

Reticence, in any sense of the word, had never been Grace's long suit. In fact, if there was a principal part to be taken in a conversation and Grace didn't take it the failure was merely because she wasn't anywhere around. From the time she was an infant and took the part of Cinderella, while all the other children were mere fairies, to the time she led the grand march with the most sought young man and was leading lady in the class play, Grace had never known from a near view what the background looked like.

So when she came back from her vacation and began to fulfill her social duties her friends sat back in amazement, for something had assuredly happened to Grace.

The whole set had begun to grow rather impatient for Grace to open up the season with her usual party. No one dreamed of taking from her the glory of the first function, for heretofore she had been so prompt, but time was flying and there had not been the ghost of an announcement.

It grew so bad that finally one of the girls decided that she'd give a small luncheon and invite Grace and a few of Grace's most intimate friends and try to find the trouble.

Grace arrived at the luncheon and, after quietly greeting the girls, settled back in a chair in complete silence.

"My, isn't it late in the season!" exclaimed Frances, adding with wonderful originality, "How time does fly!" Then she went on: "Nearly two months have passed and nothing exciting has happened yet." She paused and glanced covertly at Grace. But Grace made no reply, tho she had leaned forward attentively as Frances spoke.

"We ought to begin things pretty soon," declared Viola, daringly speaking almost directly to Grace, who thereupon turned her whole attention to Viola, with so eager an expression that that young woman relapsed into silence in sheer astonishment. To have Grace listen to you in that intense way was disconcerting, to say the least, and Viola was naturally a piece of the background and much preferred its safe obscurity.

Several others offered their conversational contributions to the general cause. But it was difficult to talk at Grace—to hint gently—when Grace herself sat with her eyes fastened unblinkingly on the speaker, as tho her very soul thirsted for every spoken word.

"Don't you think——" began Bessie, glancing around in a general sort of way until her gaze fell on Grace's rapt countenance turned full upon her. Then the carefully thought out sentence fled from her mind and she stopped.

For some seconds every one sat still, each waiting for some one else to speak and all glancing wonderingly at Grace.

Finally Grace spoke: "Do tell us about your vacation!" she urged Viola. Viola colored and stammered. Then she laughed. "What on earth is the matter?" she demanded of Grace. "You know, I didn't go away at all—and if I had gone away it would be rather late to inquire so solicitously about a summer vacation two months after it was over."

"I should say so!" exclaimed Frances, gaining courage from the ordinarily timid Viola. "Tell us what on earth is the matter."

Grace swallowed hard. "I—I——" she began. "Oh, please let me alone!" she finished, desperately, if somewhat rudely.

"Are you going to give the first party, or can I?" inquired Bessie, with a show of impatience.

Her impatience passed into amazement as Grace resumed her smile of interest and replied: "Oh, Bessie, you give such charming luncheons! Do give the first one, won't you?"

Then it was that Sally rose to the occasion. "For goodness' sake!" she exclaimed, rising and standing before Grace, "I implore you to deliver us from this mystery. What on earth has happened?"

Grace wilted. "Oh, girls," she said from the depths of her handkerchief, "you've got to help me. I—I—didn't know I was so dreadful. But it's perfect agony—and you make it so much harder. I've got to overcome myself—I've got to forget myself—to be interested in every one else, and not to talk a bit about me. And here you won't talk at all! When I want to follow, you all stand still for me to lead.

"You see, I'm—I'm—going to marry a minister, and you know how ministers' wives have to be—and I'm learning how. It'll be wonderful, the result, he says—but, oh, it's awful!"

She wiped her eyes sheepishly and turned to Sally. "Sally, dear," she begged, trying to smile, "won't you tell us—tell us about that cunning nephew of yours?"

* * *

Badly Scared.

In a little Tennessee town lived a justice of the peace who had been re-elected for many terms, altho he was the only Republican in the district. At last, one campaign when political excitement was high, it was determined to oust him and put in a Democrat. The Republican was frightened. Then he resolved upon a bold plan. The election was held in an old distillery, and before a vote was cast the justice of the peace announced his intention of making a speech.

"Feller citizens," he said, from the top of a barrel that he had mounted, "I've been justice of the peace here goin' on twenty years, an' a good many times I've saved many of you from goin' to the penitentiary, an' now you're trying to put me out of office. But I just want to tell you something. I've got the constitution and the laws of the State of Tennessee in my pocket, and just as sure as you turn me out of office I'll burn 'em up—blame me if I don't—and you may all go to ruin together."

He was elected. The voters felt that to be in a State without a constitution and laws was too great a calamity to be thought of.

* * *

Resourceful.

A number of LaSalle street men at luncheon one day were discussing the remarkable ability of a certain operator in the street to weather any financial storm.

"Why," said one of them, "that chap's a wonder. I don't know how many times they've had him against the wall, yet he always contrives to get away."

"I have heard it," said another, "that Jones is resourceful enough to make a living on a desert island."

"Yes," affirmed the first speaker, "he could do that, too—if there was another man on the island."

* * *

Giving Her a Part.

One Saturday a crowd of children were playing war in the back yard. Some were English soldiers, some French, some German. One little girl who was told she was too small to play began crying audibly and kept it up in spite of all they could do, and even after the warning: "If you don't shut up mother will hear you and make you come in the house."

Finally the difficulty was settled by a bright boy of 10. "Oh, let her bawl," he counseled. "She can be the widows and orphans."

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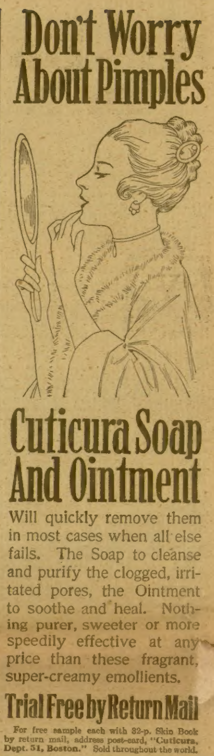

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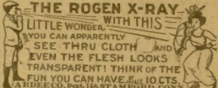

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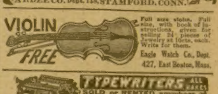

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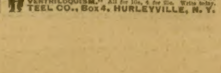

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At Barclay House

Or, A Detective Puzzle

By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER XII.

YOUNG Hartman experienced a tumultuous beating of his heart as he looked into the dark eyes of the girl. There was something in the expression of the dark, oval face, with its frame of disheveled burnt-gold locks, and something in the poise of the head and the graceful movement that stamped her as an alien to the rude precincts of Dogwood. To Hartman's senses she exhaled a breath, as it were, of another world; and yet there was in her frank, open smile a suggestion of a mind free from the restraints of conventionality, and a generous light in her face that hinted of friendly overtures and comradeship.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," she murmured, "but I would be glad if you could tell me the way to the place called Black Hollow. I wandered away from there a little while ago, and I became bewildered so that I don't know which way to go."

Hartman had removed his hat, and stood before her in a most respectful and obedient attitude. "I know the place very well," he responded, "and it will give me great pleasure to guide you to it."

"Thank you. I am sure it is real kind of you," she said. "I might have found my way back, but I was afraid to try, not knowing but that every step I took would be taking me farther away. I was just hoping some one would come along and set me right."

"I count myself fortunate, indeed, to have been that lucky person," said Hartman. "When I saw you in the tree, a few moments ago, it was some little time before I could convince myself that my eyes had not deceived me."

"You really couldn't believe there ever was such an animal?" she laughed.

Hartman colored with confusion. "I really didn't mean to say anything like that," he protested. "I knew you weren't a native of this region——"

"I have been here but a few days," she interposed. "I am Miss Berkley, and I'm camping up at the old mine with my brother Dennis and sister Anna."

"And I am Frank Hartman, station agent at Dogwood," said Hartman, "and very happy to meet Miss Berkley."

He bowed. It was an awkward bow, but he did it in a way to express the pleasure he felt in being honored by the introduction, which is about all any bow can do in the way of conserving the amenities of life.

"We have seen scarcely a soul since we went to the old mine," she said, "and one might well imagine one was living in a wilderness. But it is charming—to be out in the woods in October, when the black haws are ripe and the wild grapes and the persimmons. That reminds me that I must take some persimmons to Anna. She would never forgive me if I didn't, for these are the first I have seen. Will you shake the tree for me, Mr. Hartman? I tried it, but they wouldn't fall, so I climbed."

J. Frank hastened to assure her that he would shake the tree. He would have undertaken to pull it up by the roots if she had asked him to perform such an act.

Laying down his gun, the station agent shook the tree vigorously. The ripened fruit rained down in a shower, while Miss Berkley, quite oblivious to the fact that she was being pelted by the descending shower from the tree, ran lightly hither and thither, gathering the fruit from among the fallen leaves.

When the tree was quite bereft of its crop, the happy J. Frank joined the girl in her work. And when at times, as it happened, their hands came very close together in their search among the golden leaves, and the locks of burnt gold almost swept his cheek, he experienced a delicious sensation, and felt his heart pounding in a way it had never done before.

Already he found himself wishing that his stay with her there under the persimmon tree might be prolonged into an indefinite infinity, or something of the sort, and he was considering how their journey to Black Hollow might be lengthened by innocent deviation from the direct route, so that he might prolong the period of that happy state into which generous Fate had led him.

It was not till the little basket she had brought was filled to overflowing that he ceased his labors. Then he took up the basket, while she brushed away the leaves that clung to her skirt.

"Now, I think I'd better be going," she said, "if you will kindly show me the way."

Hartman picked up his gun and walked beside the girl up the slope, along a dim path, fringed with the red and gold of the sumacs and sassafras. For the moment he had quite forgotten his errand—to visit Black Hollow for the purpose of finding some clew, if possible, that would connect the three quartered there with the tragedy at Barclay House. Out of the corner of his eye he could see the dark, witching face of his companion, and he found it quite impossible to think of anything else just then.

At the summit of the hill she stopped to pick some red berries of the bittersweet, and Hartman deposited his burden on the ground and went to help her.

"There are so many beautiful things in the woods," she said, "that I soon load myself with them."

Frank admitted that there were many beautiful things to be found in the woods, but he was quite sure that there was nothing so beautiful as the girl herself.

As they walked on and traversed the summit of the ridge, they came in sight of a gray roof among the trees.

"Oh, I see the house!" Miss Berkley cried. "I can find my way now. I am very grateful, Mr. Hartman, for your kindness, and shan't impose on you further."

She held out her hand to take the basket which he was carrying. Hartman was rather shy when in the presence of the fair sex, and was not schooled in the art of polite deception, and for a moment he was undecided as to whether his companion's words were to be construed as literal, or whether as a form of polite dismissal. But he was endowed with a ready sympathy for the weak, and a willingness always to make himself useful to others; so he felt that there would be no impropriety in his offering to accompany her the rest of the way and carry her basket.

"It is but a short distance," she added, as he hesitated.

"Yes, it is only a little way," he ventured, awkwardly, making no move to relinquish the basket, "but, Miss Berkley, really, if you will let me, it will be a pleasure to walk the rest of the way with you and carry your basket."

"Oh, thank you," she murmured, smiling. "I was afraid I might be imposing upon you."

And so they walked on together toward the gray-roofed house behind the red fringe of the trees.

"Do you intend to remain long?" asked Frank, wondering if it were a proper thing to ask.

"Only a little while," she replied.

"Don't you like it here?"

"Oh, yes, in a way; but we came only for a brief stay."

Drops of rain began to fall. They had not noticed the rapid approach of a dark cloud from the west, for the sun was shining brightly, but now as they lifted their eyes they saw the rim of the cloud almost overhead.

"We must hurry!" cried Miss Berkley, quickening her pace. "Just listen!"

They could hear the muffled sound of the rain among the distant trees, and they caught sight of the gray, smoke-like fringe of it on a distant hill. They ran lightly down the slope, spattered by the big drops that fell straight down from the flimsy edge of the cloud.

As Hartman followed the girl along the winding path at a brisk run, there was something about the situation of it all that took the color of romance from it. His chance meeting with the girl of the dark, witching face had filled his mind with a glowing sense of romance and mystery; now it had been merged into a farce, and he was the villain with a gun, chasing the heroine across the moving-picture screen!

It was his temperamental modesty and his natural sensitiveness that made him feel the ludicrousness of the situation; and in view of the errand that had brought him into the adventure, he could not refrain from wondering what Mark Sheldon would think could he witness the scene, and try to connect it with the attempt that was being made to link the mysterious trio at Black Hollow with the tragedy at Barclay House. But these thoughts were quickly erased from his mind by a gust of wind that swept across the hills, accompanied by a downpour of rain.

The gray-roofed house was still some distance away, but near at hand, standing in the shadow of the cliff, was a small building which had once served as a tool-house, and into the shelter of it they sped thru the driving rain.

Miss Berkley gained the shelter with a bound, and stood smiling and panting, her face splattered with drops of rain, as Hartman dashed thru the open door and joined her.

"We didn't get here a moment too soon!" she panted, her eyes shining. "Good heavens! What a rain!"

There was a vivid flash of lightning, and a loud peal of thunder jarred the solitary window in the little shack. And then it grew dark, as the black cloud blotted out the last speck of sky, and the rain fell in torrents.

Frank took off his hat and knocked the clinging raindrops from it, and stood by the girl's side, watching the sheets of rain sweeping across the hills.

Another blaze of lightning, followed by a startling peal of thunder that seemed to split the very hills, crashed above the roar of the rain, and Miss Berkley uttered a little gasp of terror, and with an involuntary movement laid her trembling hand on Frank's arm as if to seek protection.

The gentle touch of her hand thrilled him with a vague sense of indefinable pleasure, and as he turned and looked into her great dark eyes and saw the fear-haunted, appealing look, a swift, ungovernable passion swept over him, and hardly realizing what he did, and moved by a blind impulse, he laid his hand gently and caressingly on the slender one placed on his arm. And for a moment they stood there in the dim

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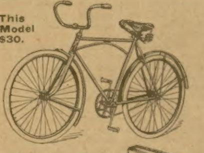

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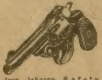

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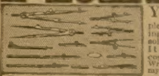

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twilight of the storm-besieged shanty, immovable, uttering no word and looking into each other's eyes, as if reading each other's souls. And into the young man's brain there came the half-forgotten words of something he had read long ago, and it kept repeating itself over and over:

"And one shall be at the other end of the world, and a thousand dangers shall lie between, and unfriendly hands shall move to keep them apart, and wars and pestilence shall intervene, but Love will keep its eternal tryst, and they shall meet and know each other, forgetting all the world!"

And so as the storm in its blackness raged about the rude shanty, and as the crash of thunder shook the hills, Frank Hartman stood facing the girl he had known but an hour, while thru his brain ran the words like a refrain: "And they shall meet and know each other, forgetting all the world!"

But even as they stood there, forgetting all the world for the moment, Fate was conspiring to snatch them apart, for "Brother Dennis," who had seen the pair run to the old shanty for shelter, seized a big umbrella and some wraps for the girl and hastened down the hill. And it was the half-dreamy gaze of Miss Berkley that fell upon him as her eyes rested on the path.

"Oh, Brother Dennis is coming with an umbrella and wraps for me!" she cried suddenly.

And Frank Hartman awoke from his romantic musings with a rude shock. He saw the man approaching thru the falling rain, and knew the girl would soon be carried away by her big brother. Would he ever see her again?

He bent toward her, his face flooded with entreaty. "You will let me see you again?" The words came huskily.

She drew back with a sudden start, as if she, too, had been awakened from a reverie. The sound of approaching steps sounded on the path without. Again he spoke: "Will you let me see you again?"

The steps were almost at the door. Another moment and the presence of the rude intruder would break the spell. She turned her eyes to the young man for just an instant and murmured, "Yes."

J. Frank Hartman had but a confused remembrance of the details of the events that followed, for the softly murmured "Yes" that fell from the girl's lips absorbed all his thoughts. He had but little interest in the dark-eyed "Brother Dennis," who came swinging into the shack, and who, after being introduced, was kind enough to invite Hartman to the house. And a few minutes later Hartman was alone and standing at the door, watching the retreating figures of Dennis Berkley and his sister thru the still falling rain. And she was wearing the wraps her brother had brought for her—a long gray coat and a white scarf.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHILE the thunder, the lightning, the rain, and the face of a pretty girl had conspired to defeat the purpose of J. Frank Hartman to visit Black Hollow in the role of a detective, he had obtained permission to call at the place at another time. And this permission, coming as it had from the girl whom kind chance had placed in his path, he valued above any clew he might have discovered to the mystery that hung over Barclay House.

And so, having set out to follow the trail of Guilt, Love had stood by the wayside and beckoned, and he had left everything to follow. And leaving him sheltered in the little shack under the brow of the hill, his mind still absorbed with the vision of a dark, bewitching face, which would not be obscured by the remembrance of the long gray cloak and the white scarf, we will turn and follow the footsteps of Mark Sheldon, who had strolled in the direction of the Oaks.

He was crossing a deep, narrow ravine when his eyes fell on Bruno, the sedate little burro which belonged to Bobby Quick. Saddled and bridled and tethered to a jack-oak, it was cropping the dry blades of grass. Mark flung a quick glance about, across the ravine and up the slope. Standing on a ledge of rock on the face of the cliff, he caught sight of the figure of a girl. She was clad in a gray corduroy suit, and as she came from behind the stunted sassafras bushes that clung to the rocky ledges, it was the face of Katharine Turk that flashed upon him.

He lifted his hat. "This is a pleasant surprise, Miss Turk!" he greeted. "I am glad to find you so completely recovered."

"Oh, I limp a little yet." She smiled down on him from her aerie in the cliff. "I didn't walk all the way. You probably saw my automobile hitched to the oak down there?" She flung her hand toward the burro.

Mark laughed. "It has one advantage over all the others," he said. "It will never exceed the speed limit. May I come up and help you explore the cliffs?"

"If you'll promise to take a look into the cave back there in the side of the cliff," she answered.

"I promise," nodded Mark, as he leaped nimbly up the steep incline. "So you have found a cave?"

"I think so. Come and see."

She led the way along the cliff to a wide projecting ledge, under which was a large hole, almost concealed by brush and vines.

"I haven't been in it," she explained. "I didn't dare, for there might be a wolf there."

"I'll just take a look in and find out," said Mark, pushing his way thru the tangled brush.

"But you must be careful!" warned Miss Turk. "If there should happen to be a wolf——"

"Oh, he'd be in a hurry to get out!" laughed Mark. "But I can't do much exploring without a light. I can see if it really is a cave, tho."

He pushed his way to the face of the cliff, and stooping, peered into a large hole that extended back under the hill. It was about four feet high and some three feet in width, but owing to the darkness within he could see but a few feet into it. He struck a match and entered.

"Don't venture in very far," advised Miss Turk. "You might get lost."

"I don't think it is large enough for that," he called back, as he glanced ahead. "But I'm going to see."

He disappeared from view, while Miss Turk waited for his return, not without a vague sense of fear lest some wild animal might be lurking in the gloomy depths of the cave. In a few moments Mark returned.

"It extends but a short distance—not over fifty feet, I should judge," he said, "but there is quite a large chamber at the farther end. I am quite sure you would like to look it over, as you are interested in collecting geological specimens. There are some very pretty stalactites, tiff, and what the miners call mundic. Shall I go to the hotel and get some candles?"

"Oh, indeed no," she said. "I shouldn't think of letting you do that. I merely wanted to learn if it really were a cave. I can wait till I come this way again. Besides," she added, after a short hesitation, "I wanted to ask you something more about the necklace. I am satisfied it is mine. How did it come into the hands of Mr. Hartman, the station agent?"

"He found it in the room occupied by Basil Smoot, the man who was murdered at Barclay House," replied Mark.

Miss Turk uttered a little gasp of amazement. "Good heavens! How could it have come there?" she cried.

"There is no doubt that it was brought there by Basil Smoot himself," replied Mark.

The girl's face wore a puzzled look. "That is indeed strange," she said. "Why, it was stolen from me in Colorado two years ago. Who was Basil Smoot? Has anything been discovered as to who he was or what he was?"

"Nothing definite," replied Mark, thinking of the ring with the broken hearts, and wondering how it had happened that both the ring and the necklace could have got into the possession of Smoot. "Did you ever know any one by the name of Smoot?" he asked.

"Never," she declared.

"You did not see Basil Smoot?"

"No, neither before his death nor after. As you know, perhaps, my aunt and I take our meals in our own apartments, because she does not feel like going down to the dining-room, and she does not like to eat alone. So we did not see Mr. Smoot. It always gives me a horror to think of looking on one who has been murdered, and I never saw the body."

"There is another circumstance connected with the affair of the necklace that brings a queer element into it. A diamond necklace was stolen from a lady in a St. Louis hotel a short time ago, and that necklace, as it appears from all the circumstances surrounding it, is the one that was found in Basil Smoot's room!"

And Mark Sheldon related the story told to him by J. Frank Hartman, giving all the details and going over that part of it which was furnished by what Hartman had overheard from the two strangers that night in the station. For some moments Miss Turk was silent, while her face wore a puzzled expression.

"I just can't understand it," she said at length. "I know nothing of the Mrs. Lois Pemberton you mention, nor have I ever known a person by the name of Smoot. From what you tell me, however, it does appear that the diamond necklace which was stolen in St. Louis recently is the one found in the room occupied by Mr. Smoot. When this is taken into consideration, it looks as if I might be mistaken in believing the necklace to be the one I lost. But that can be easily settled. My necklace was a present from my father. He ordered it from Tiffany of New York, and it was made and fashioned according to his order. It also contains a secret mark of identification which is on record at Tiffany's. I also have the Tiffany bill of sale with the guarantee, so there will be no mistake in determining whether or not the necklace is mine."

"Not the least in the world," assured Mark. "And as strange as it may seem that your necklace should turn up here in the hands of the mysterious Smoot, and at the same time another possible claimant appear, I am inclined to be-

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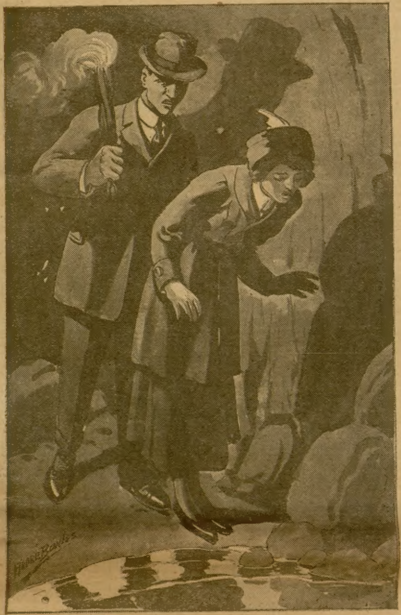

A long tongue of water was at their feet.

lieve that the necklace is yours. Also, it is likely that the necklace may have come into Mrs. Pemberton's possession after passing from the hands of the person who stole it."

"I can well understand that," agreed Miss Turk, "for it may have changed hands several times since it was stolen two years ago."

"But, Miss Turk," said Mark, "there is another queer circumstance connected with the affair. Among the effects of Basil Smoot was a broken ring—a double ring, it seems to have been, conneeted by two golden hearts which had been broken when the two circles were separated."

As he spoke he drew the ring from his pocket and laid it in the girl's hand. Her face grew white, and the hand that held the ring shook. For a little time she let her eyes rest upon it in a dazed sort of way.

"And you found this among the effects left by Basil Smoot?" she asked almost in a whisper. "I can't understand it!" She put her hand to her forehead as if trying to recall to her mind something in the forgotten past. "Mr. Sheldon," she said, after a moment's silence, "I cannot tell you how much I am amazed at what you tell me. I have the other half of the broken ring, and the history of it will always bring the most unpleasant memories to me."

"I am truly sorry that I mentioned the matter to you," said Mark, hastily. "If I had known——"

She put up her hand with a protesting gesture. "I understand," she murmured; "but it is entirely proper that you should tell me this. It is of importance in connection with the mystery surrounding the death of the stranger who came to Barclay House a few days ago. The fact that I have in my possession one part of the broken ring found among the effects of the murdered man is in itself sufficient reason for my making a statement of all I know regarding it. You will remember that, a few days ago, while in the summerhouse I dropped some trinkets from a handbag. Some were missing when I came to look over the collection when I returned to the hotel. Later, when I returned to the spot, I found, among the dead leaves, the part of the broken ring you saw me drop and returned to me. I never wear the ring, but having found it as I was on my way for a stroll into the woods, I slipped it onto my finger as the most convenient way of carrying it till I should return. No doubt you remember picking up the ring and returning it to me when I dropped it on the porch, and you probably noticed that it was a part of the one found among Smoot's effects. I know you are asking how this part of the broken ring and the necklace came into his possession. I wish I could answer that question, but I cannot."

"Was the part of the broken ring you have in your hand stolen from you?" asked Mark.

"No; the ring was not mine—at least I never so considered it, and this part of it, when I last saw it, was in the possession of the owner."

"Who might have lost it?"

"Yes. I do not think he would have parted with it under any other circumstances."

"Miss Turk," said Mark, "has it ever occurred to you that the man known as Basil Smoot might have been the owner of the broken ring—under another name?"

A startled look came into her eyes. She caught her breath with a quick gasp. "Good heavens, Mr. Sheldon!" she breathed. "Oh, surely that could not be!"

"I only mentioned it as a possibility," explained Mark. "Such things happen. One can never tell."

She made no comment, but sat on the flat stone on which she had sunk, a dazed, fear-haunted look in her eyes.

"I have a paper containing the picture of Smoot," went on Mark, drawing a copy of the St. Louis Press from his pocket. "You have never seen his picture?"

"Never."

He handed the paper to her. She took it, glanced at the picture of Basil Smoot, and drew her breath with a quick, startled gasp.

"And this is a picture of the man who was killed at Barclay House?" Her face was white as she asked the question.

"Yes," replied Mark. "You knew him?"

For a moment she did not speak. The paper fell from her hand. "Yes," she said presently, "I knew him, not as Basil Smoot, but as Benjamin R. Stormfield, once a close friend of my father's and—good heavens! can this be possible!" Her voice trailed off into silence, and she reeled as if bereft of all her strength. She would have fallen over had not Mark stepped quickly to her side and supported her.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARK SHELDON laid his hand gently on the girl's arm to steady her, a swift feeling of remorse assailing him.

"Forgive me for my stupidity, Miss Turk," he murmured, regretfully. "I should have known better than to have shocked you by bringing up so ghastly a reminder of the tragedy. Let us not speak of it again."

The color came slowly back to her cheeks, and she smiled faintly.

"It seems foolish of me that I should have been so startled by the sight of the picture," she said. "But it was all so sudden, and there was something so grewsome in it all—the sudden discovery that an—old friend had been murdered under the very roof that sheltered me, and I not know it. My God! It seems horrible!"

"Please don't let us talk of it any more!" implored Mark. "Some other time will do just as well. And look!" he added, glancing across the ravine to the hills beyond, "there comes the rain!"

Big drops had already begun to fall, and the gray sheets of the rapidly approaching rain were fast blotting out the hills.

"Oh, I must hurry back to the hotel!" cried Miss Turk, glancing at the approaching rain, "or I shall be drenched thru and thru!"

But even as she spoke a sudden downpour drove them to the shelter of an overhanging ledge on the face of the cliff. Then the rain fell in sheets.

"Poor Bruno!" murmured Miss Turk. "What a shame that he should be left out in the drenching rain!"

But as she turned her gaze down into the little valley, she discovered that the little burro had broken his hitching rein and was going up the slope at a swift trot, looking like a great gray rabbit thru the obscuring sheets of rain.

At the summit of the hill he paused for a moment to cast an inquiring glance behind—as if to discover if his mistress were following his example—and then seemingly satisfied that his wisdom in seeking the shelter of home had not been shared by her, he lifted up his voice and brayed in hoarse reproof that smote the hills like the blast of a trumpet; then, elevating his heels in contempt for all who might be behind, he trotted on over the hill, and vanished from sight behind the gray curtains of the rain.

"The ungrateful thing!" cried Miss Turk. "I really believe he takes a sort of pleasure in the trick he has played in leaving me to walk home!"

The eddying wind now swept the rain into the sheltered nook where the two had taken refuge and drove them closer to the wall.

"I believe we'll get wet if we stay here," said Mark, "and the best thing we can do is to try to get to the mouth of the cave before the worst comes."

The shifting wind was already sweeping the gray fringes of the rain into the most inner recesses of their retreat. They scurried along the cliff, keeping under the shelving rocks, till at length, breathless and bespattered with rain, they reached the clump of brush at the base of the cliff, and pushed their way thru the interlacing foliage to the mouth of the cave. Then a sharp peal of thunder shook the hills, and the rain poured down in a blinding flood.

For a time all the surrounding hills were obscured by the descending flood, and from the cliff high overhead little rivulets came tumbling down over the rocky ledges in diminutive cataracts. It looked to Mark, as he gazed at the gray sheets of water falling everywhere, as if he and his companion were likely to be marooned there for the rest of the day.

Katharine Turk, her pale face bespattered by the rain, her disheveled locks falling about her forehead, stood looking out across the narrow valley, silent and abstracted. She shivered a little as the chill wind swept under the shelving rocks.

Mark reached up and caught hold of a dead sassafras bush that grew against the cliff, and snapping it off at the ground, drew it into the mouth of the cavern, where he proceeded to break it up into short sticks. Then he took some of the smaller twigs in his hand, and applying a lighted match to them, they flamed up instantly as if they were

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made of wax, burning with a bright, almost smokeless flame, and giving forth a faint aromatic smell.

"The sassafras is the incense of the Ozarks," he said, with a smile, "and I am about to light them on the altar to see if I cannot appease the Rain Gods! And in the meantime, we shall have a little fire to drive away the chill."

As he was saying this he dropped the blazing twigs in a niche of the rocky wall, piled some handfuls of sticks upon them, and instantly a bright fire was blazing against the rocky wall.

"Oh, that's just fine!" cried the girl, extending her hands toward the blaze. "What a wizard you are, Mr. Sheldon! —or shall I say high priest?"

"Nothing less than a high priest," he said, "since my offering is graced by a vestal virgin's presence."

She stood with the firelight falling upon her face and hair, lending to her pale cheeks a tinge of color and to her hair a touch of pale gold. Her shadowy eyes were turned to Mark, and she put up her hand with a little gesture of protest.

"I am afraid that you do Vesta an injustice," she said. "Say rather a servant of Siva!"

"The Destroyer? Never!" cried Mark.

She laughed as she held out her slim hands to the welcome blaze. "Anyway, I think I have been more of a burden than a help to the world in general," she said. "What made you think of lighting a fire? If I could have foreseen this I might have brought some coffee and a pot. What a lark it would have been to play the gypsy while we wait for the rain to cease!"

Mark thought so, too, and said so frankly, and would have run back to the hotel and brought all the necessary menu for a gypsy lunch had such a thing been practicable.

"But I'll tell you what I can do," he said, after a moment's thought; "I'll pull down some more sassafras bushes and kindle a fire back in the cave—enough to furnish a good light, and give us a chance to explore it. It will sort of fill up the time while we wait for the rain to cease. What do you think?"

"It's a fine idea!" she declared.

And so Mark made haste to pull down another sassafras bush, and he carried the broken pieces into the cavern, where he kindled a fire with the aromatic twigs, and then returned and brought Miss Turk. The ascent from the mouth of the little cave was quite steep, and Mark assisted her up the incline with one hand while he held a torch to light their way in the other.

Some thirty feet of ascent brought them into a rather spacious chamber. The walls were covered with tiff and a white spar, and flashed and gleamed like frost in the flaring light. The ceiling was some ten feet from the floor, with huge stalactites here and there hanging like frosted icicles from the fluted rocks.

"Oh, this is just splendid!" cried Miss Turk. "I'm afraid I'll have to bring Bruno back to carry away my specimens when I am thru."

She took a hammer from the little canvas bag she carried, and began to examine the walls. Mark picked up a blazing stick from the fire and held it as a torch for her while she worked.

When she had explored every nook and corner of the chamber and had filled the bag with specimens, she came back to the fire, took a seat on a bowlder of white spar, and began to make a closer examination of her collection.

She flung a glance at Mark. "You smoke, don't you?" she asked.

"Sometimes," he nodded.

"Then smoke if you have your cigars. It isn't offensive to me in the least. I rather like the fumes of it."

And Mark lit a cigar and smoked while she went over her collection, stopping now and then to enthuse over a bit of tiff or a cube of mundic. And thru the wisps of smoke Mark let his gaze rest upon the shapely head of the girl bent over the little pile of rocks, and noted how the flickering light of the fire fell upon the perfect oval face and glinted on the shimmering hair.

He felt that he could never tire of sitting there and watching her, and it was with a sense of regret that he saw her dump her collection in the bag and rise and announce her readiness to go.

He took the bag from her hand, and then, taking a blazing stick from the fire, led the way down the steep incline toward the mouth of the cave.

A dozen yards down the passage he came to a sudden halt. He was staring in dumb stupefaction at something at his feet. Katharine Turk came and stood at his side. She, too, glanced down, and a half-stifled cry came from her lips. A long tongue of water reaching up thru the passage was lapping the rocks at their feet!

A single glance told them the dreadful truth. The little stream that ran thru the narrow valley had overflowed its banks and was creeping upward, filling the cavern. And already all escape was cut off!

This most interesting story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

LOST AUTHORITY.

Within the recollection of the family "mother" had never before been ill. She had tied up cut fingers and filled hot water bags and portioned out medicine to everybody else, but never had she taken to her bed and caused these services to be performed for her.

So when she fell ill recently the Loffett family was badly disorganized, as tho a bomb in good working order had dropped and exploded. With united zeal every one turned to and took care of Mrs. Loffett. When she was too ill to mind they had a lovely time. They piled on blankets and then held consultations and took blankets off; they raised shades and then decided to lower them; they regulated what she ate, and they talked in subdued tones and kept the light burning dimly. And when she began getting better they had grown so as to enjoy their unaccustomed authority that the invalid could not cope with them.

"No, no, mother," Ruth Loffett would say, soothingly, if Mrs. Loffett attempted to throw back one of her bed coverings, "you must keep that on. You'll catch cold."

"But I'm really too warm," protested the invalid.

"You'll feel all right presently," Ruth would say in level tones as she tucked back the blanket about her parent. "Just lie still, mother."

Loffett was exactly as bad. When she appealed to him he merely shook his head and said, "Now, now, mother, you just lie quiet and let us manage things."

Rebellion slowly grew in the breast of the invalid. As she felt the returning health in her veins her eyes often snapped after she had been routed and laid low by some solicitous member of the family. The idea that Ruth, who was scarcely past the age when she had been spanked and put to bed supperless, was actually bossing her roused in Mrs. Loffett grim ire.

Likewise that Henry, who only a short time ago had been refused more jam, should be regulating what she ate and depriving her of what she wanted bewildered and irritated her.

The day Mrs. Loffett said she wanted to get up the entire family proceeded to shriek in horror.

"No, mother," said Loffett, anxiously, "you stay in bed and get a good rest while you have the chance."

"I should say so!" added Ruth Loffett. "And let me wait on you. I am so glad to do it. Don't throw that cover back, mother!"

"And if you get up," put in Henry, Jr., "you'll be eating all sorts of things that you shouldn't. You wanted griddle cakes this morning, remember! Griddle cakes, mother!" Henry spoke in tones of horror.

Then Ruth lowered the shades five inches and Henry absent-mindedly raised them fifteen inches, while Loffett abstracted the salt cellar on her table and removed one slice of toast from her tray. "You must not overeat," he reminded her.

"Now, just lie quiet, mother," they said in chorus as they left her.

Alone, Mrs. Loffett breathed hard and glared at the ceiling. "Haven't I got sense enough to know when I'm well?" she demanded of herself, finally. Then she smiled grimly to herself.

"I'll be all right with this magazine," she told Ruth when that young person had brought up a scanty luncheon. "You run along to that card party this afternoon. I shan't need a thing."

"I'll tell Mary," said Ruth, dubiously, "to keep an eye on you. I don't like leaving you at all, mother. You'll be sure to do something foolish."

"Oh, no!" promised Mrs. Loffett, while she clutched the bed clothes in order to restrain herself.

When Mary appeared, according to promise, to cast her eye upon the invalid she found Mrs. Loffett up and dressed.

"How do you do, Mary?" said the invalid, casually. "I wish you would go back downstairs and bake me a lot of griddle cakes at once. And bring plenty of butter and sirup. And I'll have coffee, too, and you might as well fry an egg or so while you are about it. I'm hungry."

The family, walking in upon Mrs. Loffett just as she finished her repast, fell against the wall and then staggered toward the telephone.

"You needn't call the doctor," ordered Mrs. Loffett. "I just phoned him that I was well and he needn't come around. I'm tired of this foolishness. Ruth, you'd better change that dress at once. Henry, have you fixed the furnace? And, father, what on earth are you wearing that disreputable tie for?"

Then the family felt itself slide back into its several places with a jolt.

* * *

Bill Was an A. M.

"Yaas," said Uncle Silas, "my son Bill hez got back from a special course he's been a-takin' at college, with a piece o' paper signed by the 'thorities sayin' as how he's an A. M. I dunno what an A. M. is, but I'm afeard they's some mistake about it, for judgin' from the time he gets down to breakfast he behaves more like a P. M. ter me."

Doctor Says Nuxated Iron Will Increase Strength of Delicate People 200% in Ten Days

In many instances—Persons have suffered untold agony for years doctoring for nervous weakness, stomach, liver or kidney disease or some other ailment when their real trouble was lack of iron in the blood.—How to tell.

New York, N. Y.—In a recent discourse Dr. E. Sauer, Specialist, of this city said: If you were to make an actual blood test on all people who are ill you would probably be greatly astonished at the exceedingly large number who lack iron and who are ill for no other reason than the lack of iron. The moment iron is supplied all their multitude of dangerous symptoms disappear. Without iron the blood at once loses the power to change food into living tissue and therefore nothing you eat does you any good; you don't get the strength out of it. Your food merely passes through your system like corn through a mill with the rollers so wide apart that the mill can't grind. As a result of this continuous blood and nerve starvation, people become generally weakened, nervous and all run down and frequently develop all sorts of conditions. One is too thin; another is burdened with unhealthy fat; some are so weak they can hardly walk; some think they have dyspepsia, kidney or liver trouble; some can't sleep at night, others are sleepy and tired all day; some fussy and irritable; some skinny and bloodless, but all lack physical power and endurance. In such cases, it is worse than foolishness to take stimulating medicines or narcotic drugs, which only whip up your fagging vital powers for the moment, maybe at the expense of your life later on. No matter what any one tells you, if you are not strong and well you owe it to yourself to make the following test. See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous run down people who were ailing all the time double, and even triple their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of their symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form, and this, after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. You can talk as you please about all the wonders wrought by new remedies, but when you come down to hard facts there is nothing like good old iron to put color in your cheeks and good sound, healthy flesh on your bones. It is also a great nerve and stomach strengthener and the best blood builder in the world. The only trouble was that the old forms of inorganic iron like tincture of iron, iron acetate, etc., often ruined people's teeth, upset their stomachs and were not assimilated and for these reasons they frequently did more harm than good. But with the discovery of the newer forms of organic iron all this has been overcome. Nuxated Iron for example, is pleasant to take, does not injure the teeth and is almost immediately beneficial.

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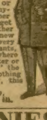

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6	18	5	5
1	21	20	15

CAN YOU SOLVE THIS PUZZLE? Each of these squares represents a letter but we have used figures instead of letters. There are 26 letters in the alphabet. Letter A is 1, B is 2, C is 3, etc. The eight letters represented by figures form two words which will interest you mightily. Send the words on a slip of paper together with 2c in stamps to pay mailing charges, etc. Agree to show my plan and mdse. to your friends and I will give you a big pack of pretty post cards & other useful novelties that will surely please you. Can you solve it? Write quick.
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The Castle of Lies

A Chronicle of Perils

By Arthur H. Vesey

Then I trusted myself to the rope.

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CHAPTER XXX.

CAPTAIN FORBES passed into the larger room. I followed him slowly

"Ah, that's better," he sighed. "Now I am among friends." His sardonic smile took in Madame de Varnier and myself, who had not yet recovered from our astonishment.

Indeed, it was rather embarrassment that held me speechless. Presently he would know that it was not Sir Mortimer whom he had surprised at the safe. And knowing that, it was inevitable that he mistake me for one of the conspirators. First of all at Vitznau—I had taken dispatches from his hand. Had I indeed been really under the influence of an opiate I might have urged that as the reason. I could have said that I was not conscious of any deception; I was simply a victim of Dr. Starva and Madame de Varnier, and not responsible for my acts.

But not only had I not taken the opiate, but Madame de Varnier knew that I had not, and even had I wished to tell the lie she would have contradicted me.

And now he had caught me red-handed at the safe. He would draw his conclusions swiftly. It would be absurd to suppose that I should know the combination of the safe, merely as Madame de Varnier's guest. A hostess does not vouchsafe to her guest the key of her strong box. If I were not Sir Mortimer, I must be in league with Madame de Varnier and Dr. Starva.

That was the conclusion he must arrive at. To tell him the absolute truth—that by one chance out of ten thousand I had stumbled on the combination—would only deepen his conviction as to my guilt.

And Helena? What would she think? Would her faith in me be so strong that she would believe me? Had Captain Forbes not surprised me at this moment my guessing of the riddle of the safe would have seemed miraculous indeed, but the fact that I had the papers, and could place them in her hands to be destroyed, would support my story readily enough.

But did I dare give to her these papers before Captain Forbes and Madame de Varnier? It seemed to me that the king's messenger of all persons must not know of Sir Mortimer's guilt. For tho the papers, the proof, was in our possession, the fact remained. And if Captain Forbes knew that I was not Sir Mortimer Brett, but an impostor, would he not demand those papers? And having them, would he not read them?

And Madame de Varnier? To what extremes would she not go in her rage? Now she believed that in some way I had been cognizant of Captain Forbes escape, and had gone to the room containing the safe to give him assistance. But when she knew, as she must know presently, that I had taken the papers from the safe, I could not doubt that she would not submit meekly. She would have her revenge, both on Helena and on myself. She would insist on telling Captain Forbes of Sir Mortimer's guilt.

He would demand from me the papers, and my cleverness would have gone for nothing. For the mind of Forbes moved in an obstinate channel. Duty to him was a soldier's first impulse. In doing what he thought his duty, he would sacrifice all. Not Helena's tears, nor my own entreaties, would prevent him from hurrying back to Downing street with the proofs of Sir Mortimer's guilt.

For some seconds after we had reached the large anteroom, the three of us stood like so many wax figures. Each of us had ample reason to feel ill at ease.

"I have the honor to report to your excellency," said Forbes, at length, in a voice that was admirably controlled despite his indignation, "that the second dispatch—a dispatch of profound importance, as I warned your excellency at Vitznau—was stolen from me last night. May I express the hope that your excellency has received it?"

"No," I said calmly. It was time to put an end to this game of cross-purposes.

"Then possibly madam can enlighten you as to its whereabouts."

"I, your excellency? Oh, no!" She swept me a mocking courtesy. "I am not so deeply in your excellency's counsel."

"My patience, Sir Mortimer," cried Forbes, breaking into direct speech, "has its limits. I see you at Lucerne only with the greatest difficulty. I warn you of the grave purport of a dispatch which I am unable to deliver to you because of your condition. The next morning, when I would see you, you have disappeared again. I trace you here with difficulty. When for the third time I attempt to deliver this dispatch, I am held captive; the dispatch is forcibly taken from me. When I ask you if you have received it, you give me an indifferent answer. I dare not believe that you are so far lost to your sense of duty that you countenance these violent acts of a bandit. But I must insist——"

He paused abruptly. I thought it because he realized that his anger had carried him too far. But when I looked where he looked, I saw Helena Brett.

"Miss Brett!" he exclaimed in pained surprise, "I am sorry to see you here."

"And I am infinitely relieved, tho bewildered, to find you, Captain Forbes." She extended him her hand, smiling wanly.

"But you will help me to make your brother realize the danger of further misunderstanding," he said gently, his anger at my indifference vanishing at sight of her pale and haggard countenance.

"My brother, Captain Forbes, is dead. He lies in that room," she answered firmly, tho her lips trembled.

She had made her decision. She, too, was determined at all hazards not to act a lie.

As for Captain Forbes, he was dumb with astonishment. His eyes widened with dismay and concern. But tho he did not speak his startled glance dwelt on me.

"Mr. Haddon is my loyal friend," said Helena, interpreting his look. At the same time she reassured me with a quiet smile that more than her words expressed her trust.

A slow flush of anger mounted to the temples of the king's messenger. He towered over me menacingly.

"You have dared tamper with his majesty's business; you have tricked one of his servants. By Heaven, you will rue it dearly!"

"Captain Forbes!" Helena laid her hand on his sleeve in her distress

(Continued on Page 14.)

Spectacles ON TRIAL Free

Don't Send Me One Cent When You Answer This

No, I don't want you to send me one single, solitary penny when you answer this announcement, and the reason is this: I have made up my mind to mail you a brand new pair of my Perfect Vision glasses absolutely free. I insist also on even paying the postage right to your door so you can try them out in the quiet of your own home as an advertisement.

Then you can do me a favor. Just as quick as they come, I want you to put them on, sit right down by the fireplace, by the open hearth, and I am sure you'll be agreeably surprised to discover that you can once more read the very finest print in your bible, even by the dim firelight. Put them on and see if I am not correct when I say that you will again be able to thread the smallest-eyed needle you can lay your hands on; do the most delicate embroidery and crochet, and keep on with the work for hours without headache or eye-pain and with as much ease and comfort as you ever did in the days of your youth.

THEY'LL ENABLE YOU TO READ THE FINEST PRINT OR SHOOT A BIRD OFF THE TALLEST TREE—

And then if you are fond of hunting, if you love your outdoor sports, shoulder your old "trusty gun" and go into the woods once more some bright, crisp morning, and see if I am not telling the truth when I say that once more you will be able to drop the smallest bird off the tallest tree-top at first shot, with the help of the Perfect Vision distance glasses of mine.

And in the evening, when the shadows lengthen and the twilight gathers, look and see if you can't distinguish a horse from a cow even at the greatest distance your eye can reach—then judge for yourself the splendid seeing quality of my Perfect Vision distance glasses

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I don't want you to take my word. There is a better way; put me on trial and send to me for a pair of my glasses at once, and try them out yourself—indoors, outdoors, everywhere and anywhere, morning, noon and night; hunting, driving, reading, sewing, anyway and everyway. Put them to every test you can, and then if you find that every word I have said about them is honest and true; if they really do what I have said they will do; if you can see again with the perfect eyesight of the days gone by, then, and then only, I will want you to do me a good turn by speaking a good word for my glasses, showing them around to your friends and neighbors and the people you have a chance to talk to. Surely you will be willing to do this for me if my Perfect Vision glasses help you in the way I say.

If you want to do me this favor, just write your name and address and age on the below certificate. Do this at once and it will entitle you to a pair of my Gold-Filled Perfect Vision spectacles, in a handsome plush-lined German-silver-tipped pocketbook spectacle case, absolutely free of charge, sent prepaid—all charges paid in advance by me—on ten days' free trial. You must, however, act promptly, as I make this offer as an advertisement.

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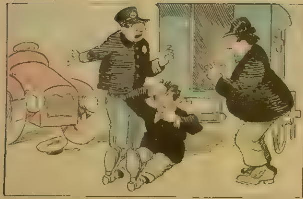


The Ambulance Officer—"Why didn't you sound your horn when you saw that man in your way?"

The Musical Genius—"I [illegible] it, officer, the horn was so dreadfully out of tune any one would rather be hit than hear it."

Rebellion.

Mrs. Finnickle (entering kitchen with newspaper)—"Norah, a celebrated doctor says that brooms are full of microbes, so hereafter you'll have to give your broom an antiseptic bath every day."

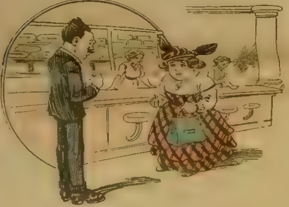
Norah—"Sure Oi'll not! Next thing ye'll be askin' me to give it massage threatements and hippydermic injections, an' ye may as well understand right now that Oi'm no thrained nurse!"

Enjoyed It.

"That last thing you sent in was good," said the editor. "We all enjoyed reading it very much."

"Well, in that case," said the youthful poet, "I take back what I said in the letter. I wrote you yesterday about my determination never to send you any of my work again."

The editor slowly shook his head. "Don't do that," he murmured; "why, that letter is what I referred to."



The Shopper—"I'd like to look at some puffs."

The Usher—"Powder, hair or cream?"

Looking Ahead.

Flatbush—"Do you believe the price of dye-stuffs has gone up so?"

Bensonhurst—"Oh, yes; why?"

"I thought if it has it might prevent my wife giving me a necktie next Christmas with so many colors in it."

Pertinent Query.

"There's a man who never finds fault."

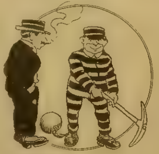
"Yes," replied Miss Cayenne, "but is it because he is patient and forbearing, or because he is too indolent to notice what is going on?"

APRIL FOOL

When girls with smiles and ringlets
  Go flitting in the sun
All youths to them are kinglets—
  Thus is love's purpose won.
Ripe lips and cheeks of roses
  Are made o'er hearts to rule,
But when the hearts are old hearts
  Young love shouts, "April fool!"

In this mad month of mating,
  Eyes speak to speaking eyes;
Each trembling soul that's waiting
  Finds love a sweet surprise.
While thin and weedy youngsters
  Win maids in manner cool,
When oldsters plead with passion,
  Young love shouts, "April fool!"

The season's magic power
  To make dead ashes glow
In any vagrant hour
  Gives age a double woe.
Let sappy youth go wooing
  Or mount a dunce's stool,
But when he traps a graybeard
  Young love shouts, "April fool!"



The Man at Large—"Too bad, a fine looking man like you should wear chains."

The Man in Shackles—"You see, it's like dis, bo; I work so fast on dis job if I don't wear 'em I'll skid."

No Longer a Child.

When the telephone bell jingled merrily in the officer's room at the police station a feminine voice replied to a policeman's "hello!"

"Is dis der poleese station?"

"Yes, madam."

"Vell, I want you to find my poy, Jakie, and send him home."

"What has Jakie done?"

"Nuddings. But he won't stay home at nights. He just runs round and runs round. And sometimes he don't get home till nearly 10 o'clock."

"How old is Jakie?"

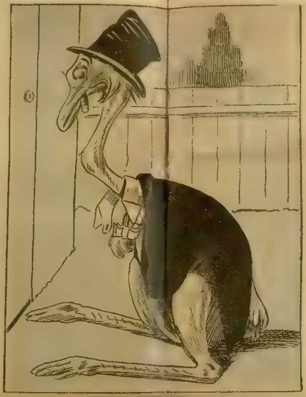
"He vuz 32 his last birthday."

"Madam," gently replied the officer, "you had better let Jakie alone. He probably has got a girl."

Diplomatic Relations Strained.

"Now I want this and I expect that, likewise so and so," declared the cook.

"That will do for you," said the lady of the house. "You act like a foreign nation attempting to win the sympathy of the United States."



[illegible]

Thought She Understood.

An English "Tommy," while stationed in a Flemish village, wanted to buy a toothbrush. Being unable to speak either French or Flemish, he could not manage to make the people understand what he wanted. After several unsuccessful attempts he hit upon a brilliant idea and, entering a little shop, he proceeded to imitate the action of brushing his teeth. At first the old dame shook her head, then her face suddenly lit up with a smile. Placing a ladder against the wall, she searched for several minutes in some cardboard boxes on a top shelf. She at last found what she wanted and triumphantly handed him not a toothbrush but a jew's-harp!

A Venturesome Thirst.

"I just heard Three-Finger Sam shouting for total abstinence."

"Yes," replied Broncho Bob. "He gathered that it had something to do with drinkin' an' he says he's willin' to try anything once."

The Reminder.

"What's that piece of cord tied around your finger for?"

"My wife put it there to remind me to post a letter."

"And did you post it?"

"No, she forgot to give it to me."

Safe.

"So you think you are safe in marrying a widow?"

"Yes. My case is different. You see her former husband never made half the money I am making."

Among the Flowers.

It was a club dinner and Mrs. Anderson, a social climber, was seated next to Mrs. Murgridge, a society woman of prominence. Wishing to engage in conversation with the social leader, Mrs. Anderson remarked.

"I understand that you have a son that is studying music, Mrs. Murgridge."

"Yes, my son is a great musician," replied the social leader, rather coldly. "He is now studying in the Paris conservatory."

"Really! How nice!" replied the social aspirant. "It must be pleasant to be able to sit among the flowers all day and not disturb any one with the practicing."

A Careful Man.

"I never saw a man so afraid of catching cold as Tompkins is."

"Is he really?"

"I should say so. Why, I've heard that whenever he takes a bath he stops up all the holes in the sponge for fear of draft."

A Masculine Idea.

A teacher in one of the primary grades of the public school had noticed a striking platonic friendship that existed between Tommy and little Mary, two of her pupils.

Tommy was a bright enough youngster, but he wasn't disposed to prosecute his studies with much energy, and his teacher said that unless he stirred himself before the end of the year he wouldn't be promoted.

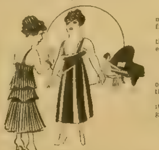
"You must study harder," she told him, "or you won't pass. How would you like to stay back in this class another year and have little Mary go ahead of you?"

"Ah," said Tommy, "I guess there'll be other little Marys."

Some Moving.

Bacon—"My neighbor told me he played a game of chess on the train the other day when they were going forty miles an hour."

Egbert—"Why, I didn't know chess players ever moved as fast as that."



"Maude sings entirely by ear."

"I thought she couldn't make such frightful noises with her mouth."

His Letter.

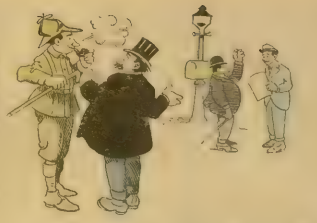
"We arrived here safe after a long and troublesome journey. The ordered goods have arrived in excellent condition. The messenger has brought us snow and hail in good order. The storm came one day later. I am sorry that the thunder burst up, and the lightning we had to patch up also. The ocean and rivers I wish you to send as early as possible, and do not forget to send us new clouds and a new sun. But the most important thing we want is a bay, as ours has been burned. Then we want a few yards of forest. Roll them all up and send immediately."

The letter was not written by a practical joker, but by a manager of a traveling theatrical company which had lost some of its scenery.

Tit for Tat.

Candid Hostess (on seeing her nephew's fiancee for the first time)—"I never should have known you from your photograph. Reggie told me you were so pretty."

Reggie's Fiancee—"No, I'm not pretty, so I have to try to be nice, and it's such a bore. Have you ever tried?"



Sherlock—"That little man over there lives a long distance from his place of business and makes his daily trips on the street cars. I deduce that fact from his habit of reaching up over his head for an imaginary strap."

Watson—"You're wrong, Sherlock! That is Mr. Peewee and he acquired that habit from marrying a schoolma'am who makes him raise his hand whenever he wishes to speak."

The Homestretch Handicap.

Oldfoge—"Doesn't Swiftpace's wife object to his staying out till two or three every night?"

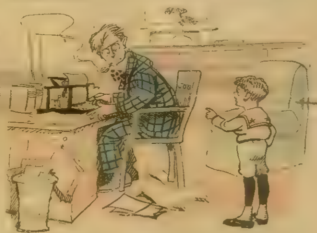
Newfangle—"She would if she knew it. So far he has always managed to get home first."—Judge.

Consoling.

"What did you say your age was?" he remarked, between dances.

"Well, I didn't say," smartly returned the girl, "but I've just reached 21."

"Is that so?" he returned, consolingly. "What detained you?"



Son of Distinguished Literary Man—"Dad, mummy wants to know if you're nearly finished with your tripe-writing?"

Her Party.

"I'm going to have a party on my birthday," said Mollie.

"What kind?" asked Jennie.

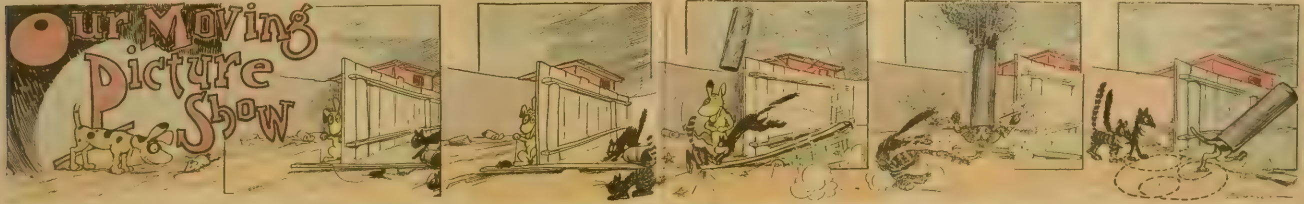
"Oh, I don't know. Republican, I guess. That's what papa is."

Off Color.

Francine—"So Cyril gave you the new motor car! Isn't it just too sweet!"

Isabel—"Oh, I don't know. It doesn't match my furs."—Judge.

THE CATS LAUGHED LAST



The Yaller Pup—"Hah! Here's a toy mouse and this is April first! I'm gonna fool those two blamed alley cats!"

"Tee hee! Here they come now! I knew the boobs would fall for the joke! They've got their peepers on the fake mouse!"

"Gee, this is goin' to be too good to keep! I'm goin' to call up The Saturday Blade editor and give him a scoop on this!"

"Ripsnort! Haw! Haw! See 'em jump for it! Oh, but this is rich! April fool! April fool!"

"Oh-oo-oo-woof! What's [illegible] me? Take it off! Yow! Wow! Somebody cut me loose from this!"

"Where am I? Where am I? Lemme out!"

The Cats—"Cheer up, that muzzle is just [illegible] you've been needing."

The Castle of Lies.

(Continued from Page 11.)

"Madam!" He turned on her indignantly. "This man has deliberately passed himself off as your brother. He tricked me into giving him important papers of state. You know that, and you defend him? You dare call him friend?"

"I did not know that," she replied firmly. "But I dare call him friend, Captain Forbes. You do not understand——"

"Understand!" he stormed, before I could make any reply myself. "I understand this only too well: He is in league with a notorious woman, and the still more infamous Dr. Starva, two Bulgarian adventurers of the most dangerous type. I think that is enough. That he has obtained under false pretenses my dispatches convicts him of high treason: He will not leave my sight until he is placed under arrest."

"I am an American," I said quietly. "You may find it more difficult to do that than you imagine."

My mild expostulation maddened him only the more.

"An American?" He advanced to me as if to lay hands on me. "Do you flatter yourself that your nationality leaves you free to play the spy and traitor with impunity? Give me those papers."

He came a step nearer. Instinctively I placed my hands at my breast pocket as if to protect the precious papers. But again Helena, distressed at his violence, restrained him.

"Captain Forbes," she pleaded, "pray restrain your anger. It is natural that you should feel the deepest suspicion against Mr. Haddon. But if you will be patient, I am sure he will make all clear to you."

"Miss Brett," he said sternly, "this is a man's work. It is hardly becoming in you to defend one who has traduced your brother's honor. How dare you claim an impostor like this as friend? He must be indeed a clever villain to have so deceived you."

"Mr. Haddon has done enough," she [illegible] proudly, "to justify my faith [illegible]. And let me tell you, Captain [illegible], that I believe in his word so implicitly that I have given him my word that until midnight tonight I shall neither question his motives nor interfere with any action of his. Nor shall I permit another to act on my behalf."

Indignation and surprise fought for the mastery, as Forbes answered with resolution:

"I shall refuse to obey you, Miss Brett. You forget that it is not yourself who has been wronged so much as Sir Mortimer and myself. Now, sir, give me those papers that you took from the safe."

For the first time Madame de Varnier, shocked into rigid attention, spoke. Her surprise at the demand forced from her a contemptuous defense of myself.

"You are mad!" she cried involuntarily.

"You see, Miss Brett," exclaimed Forbes, with satisfaction, "his accomplice defends him."

"The papers from the safe, did you say?" asked Helena, in slow wonder.

"Perhaps you know that I was imprisoned in the room yonder. It took me three hours to loosen the bar of the window. I made my way around the sloping roof of the towers by the stone gutter to the window of that other room. That window was open. When I gained it, and was about to enter it, I saw this man, whom I believed to be your brother, enter the room, bolt the door behind him, kneel at the safe, open it, and abstract from it a packet of papers which he now has in his pocket."

If Forbes had expected Helena to be dumfounded at this surprising news, his wish was gratified. But it was wonder tempered with infinite joy. The papers that convicted her brother of guilt had been rescued from the cruel clutch of Madame de Varnier. She did not realize at once that I had steered clear of Charybdis only to fall foul of Scylla. The peril of Sir Mortimer's guilt being known was now infinitely greater than it had been half an hour ago. Helena's defense of myself, and Madame de Varnier's untimely interruption, had both alienated all sympathy from Helena and strengthened his conviction that I was one of the conspirators.

If I had kept silent so long, if it seems unmanly that I should have allowed a woman to plead in my behalf—it is because I was racking my brain for a means of escape from the awkward predicament that held me captive.

"I have told you, Captain Forbes, that I have ample reason to believe in the honesty of Mr. Haddon. If he has taken any papers from the safe, it is with my fullest and deepest gratitude. It was the woman there who had stolen them from my brother. They are personal papers. They concern only my mother and myself, now that Mortimer is dead. Mr. Haddon will restore them to me."

"I shall forbid that," protested Forbes, hotly. "I tell you, Miss Brett, those are papers of State. They belong to the State. I must see that they are placed in the hands of the ministers of the Foreign Office. For the last time, give me those papers."

I leaped at the loophole Helena had offered me. If I could not prevent their falling into the hands of Forbes, at least I could delay that dire event.

"I shall obey you, Miss Brett. Into your hands alone shall I place those papers."

"If you please," she said with dignity, and held out a hand that did not tremble to receive them.

And still I hesitated. I saw the gleam of resolution in the glitter of Forbes' blue eyes. If I produced the papers now it would be only to have the king's messenger snatch them from my grasp. Forbes turned to Helena in angry triumph.

"You see, Miss Brett, he hesitates. The woman and himself are as reluctant that the papers fall into your hands as they are that I obtain them. He thinks that he may trick you, as he has already once tricked me. Is there nothing I can say to shake your blind confidence in this treacherous impostor?"

"Nothing," said Helena, with resolution; but I could see her troubled surprise at my reluctance.

"Then I shall be forced to resort to violence. I am going to have those papers, and at once. If you are so blind to the grave danger of letting this man keep the papers, even for the moment, I am not. How could he have taken them from the safe unless it were with the permission and perhaps at the entreaty of this Madame de Varnier?"

"The inference is clear enough, I should think—she must have left the door of the safe open."

Helena spoke confidently, but trust in me had been put to a sore test.

"Your credulity is very great if you think that. Why, madam, I saw him deliberately work the combination of the safe."

Helena uttered a cry of horror at my supposed treachery. Her trust was shattered.

"I could not dream of a villainy so hypocritical."

Instinctively she came close to Forbes' side as if for protection. She had read in my eyes that Forbes spoke the truth. No words of mine could convince her now of my sincerity.

Madame de Varnier had been quite forgotten by us all. Until now she had been listening in breathless silence. Forbes' declaration that I had taken the papers must have seemed to her the sheerest absurdity. She had been certain that she had locked the safe; she was equally certain that no one but herself knew the word by which it might be opened. She must have thought, too, that my tacit confession of taking the papers was a ruse to deceive her, tho she could not guess its purpose.

But when Captain Forbes asserted with evident sincerity that he had seen me working the combination, her anxiety became unendurable. At the risk of being surprised at the safe, she had stolen quietly to the room, thinking herself unobserved. But tho our backs had been turned from the room, I had seen her movement by her shadow cast on the floor by the setting sun pouring in the open window thru which Captain Forbes had made his entrance.

I clutched the arm of the king's messenger; I made an imperious gesture for caution and silence. I pointed to Madame de Varnier disappearing into the little room of the safe. With a motion incredibly light for so heavy a man, Forbes tiptoed after her, and watched her open the safe thru the half-closed door.

It was only a question of instants before she had thrown open the door of the safe with a cry of dismay. But that instant sufficed.

As Forbes turned his back to me I took swiftly from my pocket the two packets. One envelope was plain, with no writing on it. The other was addressed to Sir Mortimer Brett and bore a foreign stamp.

No word was spoken. I had but to hold the two packets before Helena. In an instant she had hidden in the bosom of her dress the first packet I have mentioned, whose envelope was plain; the other I returned to my pocket.

Madame de Varnier sprang to her feet with the litheness of a tigress. She came toward me as I stood by Forbes' side with a rage that was dreadful in its savage intensity.

Before I could guess at her purpose, she had torn my coat open and seized the packet I had placed there. She pressed it into Forbes' hand. Her bitter rage and disappointment made her oblivious of the fact that she had given him only one of the packets.

"Take it!" she screamed. "Take it! Ah, M. Coward, you are clever, but it shall avail you nothing. At least I shall have my revenge."

Forbes buttoned his coat over the papers he had received with an amazed but grim satisfaction. Helena, standing apart from us, was convulsively clenching and unclenching her hands. Unseen by the other two, I cast her a meaning glance that she should exert her strong will to regain her poise. When they looked at her she stood passive and acquiescent. As for myself, I affected an air of chagrin and defeat.

"You will bear me witness, Miss Brett, that I did my best to place the packet in your hand. I can only hope that Captain Forbes will restore you those papers without reading them, or that they are of little importance."

"Little importance!" hissed Madame de Varnier. "Sir, guard those papers well; your ministers at Downing street will not thank you if you lose them. And now, M. Coward, that you have conquered me, but not robbed me of my revenge, how much longer are we to stay here?"

Captain Forbes showed little surprise at the turn affairs had taken. He interpreted Madame de Varnier's move as that of one who had betrayed a confederate for motives of revenge. While he recognized the fact, he mistook the motive.

"And they speak of honor among thieves!" he sneered in an aside to Helena.

I feared that Helena might make an

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indignant protest. But she said nothing. I supposed her silence dictated by prudence; this was no time to champion my cause. But as I looked at her I read her perplexity in her troubled eyes. I had given her back the papers, indeed, but that I should have known the combination was too startling a fact to be accepted without distrust. I could have known the combination only from Madame de Varnier; that proved me to have been in her confidence. If I had repented and betrayed my accomplice in my remorse, she was grateful for the act itself, but she could no longer trust me.

"As this woman says," Forbes was speaking to me, "there is nothing to detain us here longer. But you, sir, as well as this woman, will leave this room only to be placed under arrest. You must consider yourself my prisoner."

With these words he strode toward the door of the staircase, and turned the handle.

"It is locked," he said sternly. "Who has the key?"

I handed it to him in silence. As he received it from me he glanced meaningly toward Helena. It was one more link in the chain of evidence. I confess I could have wished the key had not been in my pocket.

He turned the key. To the consternation of all of us the door still resisted his efforts. He exerted all his strength to no purpose.

"What new trick is this?" he demanded furiously of me.

"I think," it was to Madame de Varnier I answered, "that Dr. Starva has taken the precaution of insuring himself a free field."

CHAPTER XXXI.

MADAME DE VARNIER had been seated in sullen apathy. At my words she looked up at me for a moment in dull surprise. Then slowly, as if a mask had fallen over her face, an expression of horror and insensate fury disfigured her beauty. She rushed to the door; she shook it frantically; she beat on it futile blows.

"What does it mean, this locked door?" demanded Forbes of me once more.

"It means that Dr. Starva, the ally of this woman, for some purpose of his own, has imprisoned us here," I answered calmly. "Even you, Captain Forbes, will not accuse me of fastening the bolt."

He turned from me in contemptuous silence. "It is only a question of a few hours at the most," he said reassuringly to Helena. "At dawn we can attract the attention of some one from the street. In the meanwhile we must be patient."

"I am thankful that you were able to make your way to me," said Helena, brokenly. "It would be dreadful to be here alone with my brother lying dead in that room."

"Are we to make no effort?" I demanded. "Surely in some way——"

My words were arrested on my lips. Madame de Varnier had abandoned herself to her despair. As I spoke she looked up furtively, and then transfixed me with a glance of warning.

"If you can suggest a means, I am ready to listen," said Forbes. "But that door of oak with its bands of steel is beyond my strength. As to the possibility of a descent from the outside, it is hopeless to think of it. Even if one existed, I should scarcely avail myself of it, leaving you with these people, Miss Brett."

"But Mr. Haddon——"

"Is not to be trusted, I am afraid," said he, with a sneer.

"Mr. Haddon, it is hard to believe you guilty of treachery. In spite of everything, I wish to keep faith with you. But will you not explain to Captain Forbes——?"

"No, Miss Brett," I returned bluntly. "I shall make no explanation to Captain Forbes until he sees fit to ask me for one."

"And I should refuse to believe any," said Forbes, with contempt. "You say your brother is in that room. May I see him?"

She led the way to the oratory in silence. The door closed gently behind them. Madame de Varnier and I were alone.

"I hope you are satisfied, monsieur, with your adventure in this Castle of Happiness," she said, with a hysterical sob.

"I am waiting for the climax," I answered significantly: "Is it to be a comedy or a tragedy?"

"Oh, God!" she raised her clenched hands in a gesture full of anguish, "it is I who am asking that."

"Why did you look at me in that manner? You wish to tell me something—to warn me."

"The death-mask," she whispered. Her emotion suffocated her. "Why should Dr. Starva have imprisoned us here, unless——"

I looked at her stupefied.

"But Prince Ferdinand is not here, at the chateau."

Her self-control vanished utterly. She clung to me in her despair.

"Save him! Save him!"

"But Ferdinand is not at the chateau!" I repeated.

"Last night—in the music-room—that death-mask!" She spoke incoherently, but her meaning was too clear.

"You knew that he was coming here?"

"When you told me of the death-mask, when I saw the rage of Dr. Starva—I realized his danger. Yes, he was coming here—tonight. But I telegraphed him that at all costs he must not come. But if Dr. Starva by some means intercepted that telegram——"

"Who sent it?" I questioned anxiously.

"Jacques."

"Then your prince is doomed. It was Jacques who betrayed to me your presence here. I thought it was because I bribed him sufficiently well. Be sure of this, he is Starva's creature."

"Heavens, how you torture me! But if this is true, why did he allow Sir Mortimer's sister to come to me? He must have known that you sent for her."

"With ourselves she would be safely out of the way. Dr Starva is more ingenious than I have given him the credit of being. We are caught like rats in a trap."

"But you must save him!"

"Impossible!"

"Listen; it is not impossible. There is a ladder—not on this side, but beneath the window of the oratory."

Her eyes glittered in the semi-darkness. She placed a finger on my lips. I had cried out in my surprise.

"A ladder of a hundred feet or more! And it stands against the wall of the tower!" I exclaimed incredulously. "Besides, if it were there, Captain Forbes must have seen it."

"This ladder, I call it so for want of a better name, is made of great stones half as long as one's forearm that project from the smooth masonry at intervals of a foot. The chateau is old, very old. In feudal times with a stout rope one might escape from the tower. But it is impossible! We have no rope." She wrung her hands.

"But if this ladder of stones reaches from roof to terrace, it would be simple enough without a rope. The stones are built out at regular intervals? How far are they apart?"

"At intervals of a foot, they reach in a straight line for one hundred feet. But the chateau tower is one hundred and fifty feet high. These stones begin at the roof. No one could drop that fifty feet to the marble terrace below and live. Yes; we are caught like rats in a trap."

"Fifty feet! It would mean a broken limb, if not certain death. But if a rope could be knotted of our clothing for half that distance!"

I went into the room thru whose window the king's messenger had made his untimely entrance. I leaned far out of the window, shuddering. I was resolved to make the descent myself. Twice I had proved myself a coward. This was to be my chance, unless Forbes should stubbornly refuse to believe in the existence of Ferdinand's danger.

The moon was rising; it shed an unearthly light on the pale face of Madame de Varnier as she looked up at me anxiously. The wind came in fitful gusts.

Suddenly there sounded a muffled report. At first I thought it thunder in the far-away mountains. But as I listened intently the mysterious sound was repeated again and again, tho more and more feebly. And it came from above.

"Do you hear it, that strange, muffled clap?" I asked of Madame de Varnier.

She took my place at the open window. For some moments she heard nothing. Then, strangely enough, tho the wind was blowing almost a gale, it sounded distinctly.

"It is a flag on the high flagstaff of the central tower," she said presently. "But who can have given orders that it be raised?"

"That is a matter of indifference," I said joyfully. "An ensign so large as that requires a fairly substantial cord. If we can get that cord and plait it. Where is it fastened? Surely at one of these windows?"

"No," she said anxiously. "It is Dr. Starva who has raised that flag. But

(Continued on Page 17.)

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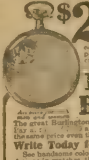

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The Castle of Lies.

Continued from Page 15.)

why?" The question seemed to increase her anxiety

"Then where?" I demanded impatiently.

"It must be from one of the windows of the story below."

"Well, we shall soon see."

I poised myself to clamber thru the window on the broad stone gutter, along which Captain Forbes must have made his way. Then I hesitated.

"What! You are afraid!" cried the woman, fiercely. "If so, I will go myself."

"No, I am not afraid," I replied, with deliberation. "I am wondering what they will think when they come from the oratory presently, to find me gone. She will think that I am your accomplice."

"I can easily tell the truth."

"They will scarcely believe you. Shall I, or shall I not, tell them of Ferdinand's danger?"

"But will they believe you? While you hesitate Prince Ferdinand may be assassinated. Is this a time for explanations? Say that the fools persist in misunderstanding you, it is only a question of an hour or two at the most before you may tell the truth. Go, and I swear by the cause I hold sacred that if you save him the honor of Sir Mortimer Brett shall yet be saved."

"You have promised much already only to deceive me," I said gloomily.

"But I swear it! They are coming; I heard the door of the oratory open."

I hesitated no longer.

CHAPTER XXXII.

I CLUNG to my precarious support, lying prostrate on the broad stone gutter. The roar of the swirling river beat at my senses confusedly; the giddy height made my head swim. Something of the horror I had felt in rounding the overhanging shoulder of the mountain with Willoughby that fatal day came to me now.

But presently the giddiness passed. The extraordinary promise of Madame de Varnier rang in my ears. How it was possible for her to explain away Sir Mortimer's damning words if the letters were genuine, I could not see. But this had been a day of miracles.

Slowly I made my way toward the first of the flanking towers. The wind struck me with redoubled force as I turned the corner. I heard the ensign above fluttering loudly in the gale.

I looked up. I could see it now. It floated bravely in the spanking breeze. The moon, shining squarely on it, made it even possible for me to distinguish its design. It was the national flag of England, the royal arms in its center. Then I remembered the quotation from the Blue Book I had read early in the morning just before Captain Forbes had signaled to Helena:

"The flag to be used by His Majesty's Diplomatic Servants, whether on shore or embarked on boats, is the Union, with the Royal Arms in the center thereof, surrounded by a green garland."

There was a grim irony in this flag flying proudly over the chateau in which Sir Mortimer lay dead. But if Madame de Varnier had spoken the truth in protesting that she did not know that the flag had been raised, why had Dr. Starva caused it to be flown?

The strange perplexity Madame de Varnier had shown when she had heard the flutter of the flag occurred to me now. Was it by any chance a signal—a signal of as dread a portent as the double stamp? If that were true, I might disconcert Dr. Starva's plans materially when I lowered it presently.

I had reached my goal now. For some minutes I was compelled to lie inactive, however; for the flag, bellying in the gale, made it impossible for me to grasp the cords.

As I lay there impatient, waiting my chance, I glanced below. I could see plainly the ladder of stones, as Madame de Varnier had called it, the ragged edges of the granite sparkling brightly in the moonlight. I leaned over as far as I dared; they extended as far as I could see.

As my eye traveled the line to the terrace below, the door of the great hall opened. A flood of light irradiated a portion of the terrace. I saw distinctly two figures conversing a moment at the doorway. One of these figures entered the chateau again, but the other, and I had recognized Dr. Starva by his great bulk before the door was shut, stole across the terrace, and entered a brougham that stood waiting.

As the carriage disappeared under the covered archway of the passage leading to the village street, I made renewed efforts to reach the cords. I could readily guess Dr. Starva's mission. He had gone to meet Prince Ferdinand at the station. Heaven knows how eager I was to be one of the reception committee!

When at last I had caught one of the cords, I severed it thoughtlessly with my penknife. I had not counted on the strength necessary to hold so large a flag. The cord slipped from my hand. I expected the flag to fall, and reached out frantically for the other rope. But in some way the rope I had severed, and to which the flag was not fastened, became entangled in the pulley, and the flag, falling halfway down the pole, remained at half-mast

I now reached up as far as I could, standing on the stone gutter. I was about to sever the other cord, that to which the flag was fastened, when it occurred to me to attempt to disengage the ropes from their fastening at the window below. I was completely successful. I estimated that I had now a length of at least fifty feet

When I had plaited the cords double, and knotted them at intervals to prevent them from slipping thru my hand, I made a loophole to slip over the last stone of my ladder when I should reach it. Then, taking the cord between my teeth, I lowered myself cautiously over the gutter.

The wind was still blowing in fitful gusts. I had been reluctant to avail myself of the few extra feet of rope necessary to keep the flag afloat. I fastened the end of the cord about the stone gutter, leaving the flag still flying at half-mast. There seemed a certain aptness that my carelessness in cutting the rope had seen to it that the dead ambassador be fittingly honored.

It seemed ages before my feet touched the first block of granite projecting from the smooth masonry. But once on my way the first part of my descent was made with no great difficulty.

The roar of the river sounded nearer and nearer. I was more than halfway down now. The numbness had passed from my arm; I was more confident; I tried to hasten my progress.

Step by step I neared the terrace.

And when I had reached it? The excitement of the escape, Madame de Varnier's vehement importunity, had engrossed my attention so far. The descent itself had seemed so hazardous that the confronting of Dr. Starva had been forgotten. But how was I to conquer him unarmed? Not by force certainly. Strategy must be my ally.

Suddenly the perspiration broke out on my forehead. I had felt for my next step, and it was missing.

Frantically my feet reached down for it. I lowered myself one more round; still I could not touch it. Then I laughed aloud in the ecstacy of my relief. I had reached the last round of the ladder.

My arms ached. Merciful heavens, how they did ache! But I was full of courage in spite of my exhaustion. I lowered myself by my arms still another round, and slipped the noose over the last of the stones I could reach. Then I trusted myself to the rope.

In spite of the knots the friction burned my palms as if they were branded by fire. I could not regulate my speed; I was too exhausted for that. I trusted to blind luck: I could only hope that Madame de Varnier's estimate was a conservative one.

How far I actually fell I have no idea. My feet came to the pavement with a force that sent me headlong. But aside from the violent shock and a bruise or two, I had suffered no injury. I struggled thankfully to my feet.

My arm was seized not too gently. If I had wished to make an outcry I should have been prevented by the hand placed at my mouth. I peered into the face of the man who had made me captive. I do not know whether I was more relieved than consternated to recognize Locke as we stood in the shadow.

"Haddon!" he cried, as he made out my features. "Where in hell did you come from?

"Not hell, Locke; say rather heaven." I pointed upward to the tower.

"You must be in a desperate hurry when you essay the role of an angel to come flying thru the air," he said grimly and the hold on my arm tightened. "Suppose you tell me your errand."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"LOCKE," I panted, leaning breathless against the wall, "for God's sake let me go! It is a matter of life or death."

"Gently—not so loud."

Again his hand was placed at my mouth. He pulled me back into the shadow of an angle of the wall. He listened intently.

There was a heavy footfall on the terrace. It sounded nearer. A man, muffled in a cloak, came to the edge of the band of moonlight. He also was listening. Presently he stole softly to the parapet, and looked down at the village. Neither of us spoke until he had resumed his beat before the great portal of the chateau.

"Who is he?" I whispered.

Locke led me out of hearing, hugging the wall.

"You know as well as I. Now, then, for our deferred talk. This morning I asked you for some explanation of your extraordinary conduct. You chose not to give it me. Well, I mean to have it now. Come, what is this errand that sends you flying thru the air for a hundred feet at the risk of your neck? It appears to be pressing."

I was still struggling for my breath. It was not physical fatigue that made me tremble so much as sheer despair at the hopelessness of disarming Locke's hostility and suspicions in the precious minutes that remained. At any moment now Dr. Starva might be returning.

"The death-mask!" I began incoherently, "Prince Ferdinand——"

His grasp tightened. He drew me roughly toward him in his surprise.

"The death-mask! What of it?"

"Starva has lured Prince Ferdinand to the chateau. Already he has gone to meet him at the station. When he returns with him here——"

"Ferdinand comes to meet Sir Mortimer."

"Sir Mortimer, man, is dead."

"Dead! And you have undertaken to fill his place? It is very considerate of you."

His voice vibrated with distrust. But I tried to keep my temper.

"If Ferdinand enters that door with Starva he will never leave it alive unless help is summoned."

For a moment Locke's suspicions wavered. I had spoken with a solemnity that touched even his skepticism.

"And who has told you this?" he asked slowly.

"Madame de Varnier, the Countess Sarahoff."

"Ah, your friend of the kursaal. Where is she?"

I pointed upward.

"In the tower there. The four of us—Captain Forbes, Miss Brett, that woman, and myself were trapped by Dr. Starva. Don't you see, it was to clear the field for action—to leave him to accomplish his frightful work unmolested? Locke, this is no time for talk. One of us must conceal himself in the hall there; the other summon help. Are you armed?"

"Rather," he answered grimly. "It is that fact that should show you the uselessness of struggling."

"You have called me a fool more than once," I cried bitterly. "But you are a hundred times a fool that you are blind to the need of action."

"All in good time, my friend. I have

(Continued on Page 23.)

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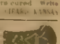

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Men deliberately lie, while women merely suppress the truth.

Love may be blind, but it can usually locate the almighty dollar.

Time isn't always money to the man who does a credit business.

You seldom meet a married man who admits that he knows it all.

Many a man talks thru his hat instead of using a telephone.

The higher a man climbs the harder will be his fall— if he falls.

There is a much better market for good men than there is for bad men.

When a pusher enters the race it's a safe bet he will beat the knocker to the goal.

When a wife wants pin money her husband is compelled to come to the scratch.

The man who steals a kiss without first warning the girl misses the best part of it.

Children who have been brought up as pets are always more or less disagreeable.

The stronger the language a man uses the more confidence a woman has in his bravery.

Some men can make a dollar go a long way, but not as far as a reserved seat in Heaven.

They once tried to shut a woman up in a lunatic asylum—but they say she kept on talking.

One of the great drawbacks in this world is that men never know it is too late until it is too late.

A girl who parades the streets in short skirts thinks other people think she has shapely ankles.

Young man, don't forget to ask her if she can support you in the style and luxury to which you have been accustomed.

When a bride discovers that what she married likes corned beef and cabbage better than angel food, another honeymoon bubble has exploded.

Home and Health

SPRING STYLES.

When skies are shining cheerily
And winter's on its way,
The hours that loitered wearily
Begin to grow more gay.
We know that Nature dutiful
Will give the same old show,
And in the spring be beautiful,
Just as a while ago.

Exact and astronomical,
Is Nature's annual plan.
For novelties so comical
We must depend on man.
And as the skies grow sunnier
We see with honest cheer,
The fashions getting funnier
With every passing year.

FASHION NOTES.

Very soft woolens seem to be in favor for spring skirts.

Dainty robes of embroidered flouncing are again in vogue.

Leather belts and trimmings are a feature of many sports suits.

Many brightly colored buttons will trim the spring garments. Filigree buttons will be smart.

The crown of a stunning sailor hat was made of black and white satin. It was a combination of the black and white with a band of green grosgrain ribbon. The facing was of green straw.

Sleeves are long, but the tight-fitting sleeve is passe. The bishop sleeve, the loose Breton sleeve with the undersleeve of some sheer fabric, is to be seen for spring; novelty sleeves are the thing at present.

Brocaded ripple crepe is seen everywhere. A rather odd gown was made in green. The waist had a high collar and triple shoulder capes, and came down in a pointed panel. The fact that no other color relieved the emerald green made the costume striking.

The demand for separate skirts has been stimulated by the application of fashion to this garment, to which practically every style appearing in dress and suit skirts is now successfully applied. In this development the sport skirt is an especially big factor. The separate skirt in highest favor continues to be short. The plain skirt frequently reaches just below the tops of the high boots, but the skirts showing broken lines are somewhat longer.

A new buttonless blouse will meet the need of the woman who is always in a hurry. It is of soft white satin veiled with white chiffon, and the front crosses in surplice fashion from right to left. A collar of the white satin rises high at the back, turns over, and then extends downward the entire length of the surpliced front. A snap button holds the loose fronts at the bust line and another fastens the waistband. This dainty blouse has long sleeves, and they bell a little over the hand.

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

Do not hesitate to darn embroideries. It is quite the thing to do with fine and valuable pieces of work, just as fine lace mending is approved by even the wealthy if it is necessary to preserve a bit of beauty. Lace menders are so expert that it is difficult and frequently impossible to detect their work and it is possible to mend embroidery in the same way.

Tiny linen crochet baskets in which to serve salted nuts or bonbons at table are now decorated with colored initials or flower baskets done in cross stitch work. The work is put on at the sides where a solid oval or square is crocheted for the purpose. The bit of color makes the baskets look like little Dresden china ones, after they are starched and done up freshly.

Blanket stitch is popular at the present time, largely due to the fact that a bit of color can quickly be applied in a decorative way by means of this useful stitch. Some of the new serge dresses of dark blue have a bit of embroidery done in this way, using worsteds as the medium. Long and short blanket stitch around the collar and the sleeves or outlining a vest effect on the front of the dress, with perhaps a scroll design carried out in the same way on the girdle, gives a telling touch to the gown. Gray worsted or an old blue shade on a darker blue are new and attractive combinations.

HEALTH NOTES.

Fill the foot of a soft sock with hot salt, then tie a knot in the sock leg; apply to aching ear or tooth and almost immediate relief will be the result.

To prevent your hands chapping always wash them in cold water; but, if this is too Spartan for you, dusting them over with a little toilet oatmeal after each washing will sometimes prevent it.

The lungs chiefly influence beauty by the efficiency with which they purify the blood, and their influence is profound. Let them therefore be given the opportunity of doing their work well. Do not compress them with tight clothing. Give them pure air. Keep the bedroom windows open day and night.

One should not eat when tired, and eat lightly if suffering from any great emotion. Eat slowly always, and rest for half an hour after each meal. A woman who eats quickly or who hurries to pleasure or work immediately after a meal will almost invariably suffer from flushings and red features sooner or later.

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

In cleaning clothes with gasoline a ring is sometimes left. The ring can be removed by steaming over a tea kettle.

Dried orange peel revives a neglected fire more thoroly and quicker than anything else, but is a very noisy and spluttery remedy.

When making up a linen or gingham dress with linen, Cluny or torchon lace, it is well to shrink the lace first, then there will be no danger of it puckering when the dress is laundered.

Don't think that because the baby grows up so soon it is not worth while to provide him with conveniences. An inch-thick rope, covered with soft material and stretched across a corner of the room about a foot from the floor, will help the baby to pull himself up or guide him in walking. His little hands grasp it easily, and it is an amusement as well as an aid in his baby gymnastics. It may be fastened to the wall on hooks and taken down when desired.

RECIPES

CODFISH JUMBLES—To each cup of freshened and flaked fish add two well-beaten eggs and mix well. Season with pepper and drop by tablespoonfuls into hot fat. Fry brown.

EGGS A LA TURK—Prepare scrambled eggs, and pour over six slices of toasted bread. Put one tablespoonful tomato puree on each piece, and in the center of puree one-half tablespoonful of chicken livers sauteed in bacon fat.

CREAM OF SPINACH SOUP—Boil three quarts of well-washed spinach in boiling water for about thirty minutes. Put a little salt in the water and a teaspoonful of sugar. Drain, chop, and pass thru a sieve. Add to the spinach two pints of white stock. Make a cream sauce with one-fourth cupful of butter, one-third cupful of flour, and two cupfuls of good milk, and one-half cupful of cream; when cooked add to the stock, and season with salt and pepper, and stir well together. Serve in bouillon cups.

CREOLE EGGS—Stew one can of tomatoes and one green pepper, shredded, until the tomato is reduced one-half; turn on a serving-dish, arrange on the tomato five rounds of toast, and upon each of these a poached egg. Melt and brown two tablespoonfuls of butter, add one tablespoonful of vinegar or lemon juice, and, when the liquid boils, pour the sauce over the eggs; sprinkle with salt and pepper and serve at once.

DON'T BE HALF-HEARTED.

There are many people who cannot throw themselves heart and soul into anything. They are too self-centered. All they care about is studying their own whims and fancies, and the result is bad for those they have [illegible]. Many housewives know how [illegible]factory it is to have a servant who goes about her work in a half-hearted way. The girl herself takes no interest in the house. It does not matter to her whether it looks bright and tidy, or is just the reverse. So that she can get along comfortably by doing only a quarter of the work—and that badly—for which she is paid, she is quite contented. The frequent complaints of a dissatisfied mistress make no difference. Mary Ann goes on doing just what she likes and how she likes, until at last those who employ her can stand her laziness and lack of interest no longer.

There is no doubt that half-heartedness rarely—if, indeed, ever—pays. How can one expect it to do so when, to be successful, one must not only work hard, but thoroly? Yet success is always its own reward; and when this is achieved, the task, whether trivial or otherwise, becomes so interesting that, like a good story, we feel bound to keep on with it to the end. We are obliged to do it ourselves, for no one else can be intrusted with that in which we have taken so active a part. Who, for instance, having nearly finished making a beautiful dress, which gives every indication of being perfect, would willingly allow any one, however clever, to put the finishing touches to it? The woman who had started the work would wear herself out sooner than let another put in one stich.

It is only the half-hearted who can brook interference, and who will meekly stand by and let some one else act for them. Such spiritless conduct is to be condemned, for it is responsible for most of the failures in life. If we cannot throw ourselves, body and soul, into anything, it is best to drop it, for half-heartedness never pays.

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Glen, the Boy Pilot

Or, Rafting on the Muskalong

By Milford Merrill

Author of "Riding the Logs," etc.

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CHAPTER XIX.

GLEN began to dream dreams when the last log for the winter was on the rollbank — six million feet of as fine sawlogs as ever were cut from the Michigan woods. That winter's work had been a triumph for our boy lumberjack. He saw rose-colored pictures ahead, and with them came the view of Myra Weatherby's sad face as he saw it last at her own home.

He had distrusted the genuineness of her sorrow for her haughty treatment of him, but now, remembering his last interview with the girl's father, he began to fear that he had wronged the daughter. He went to Wenago a few days after all the logs had been banked to settle with Mr. Beaver. The lumberman was in his happiest mood.

"You're getting there, my boy!" cheerfily cried Mr. Beaver, as he made out a check in payment of the boy's share on that logging job.

"Why," cried Glen, as his eyes caught sight of the amount, sixteen hundred dollars, "there must be some mistake."

"I don't think so," dryly responded the lumberman.

"But the amount is considerably less as I figure it," said Glen.

"How do you figure it, my lad?"

Glen gave the rate per thousand he had agreed upon with Mr. Beaver in the fall. The gentleman smiled, his deep-set eyes twinkling humorously.

"If that was the bargain," said he, "you didn't get enough——"

"That was certainly the bargain, sir. I am entitled to no more."

"Well, my boy, it is this way," proclaimed the big man of Wenago, "when a jobber works for me and does an exceptionally fine piece of work I always share the profits with him. No, no, lad, you are not the exception. I did the same with Tommy Baldwin two years ago. It's one of my jokes, you see, on the men who work for me. No, I shan't change the face of the check; you are entitled to every bit of it as it is written."

"How would it be if I had made a botch of the job?" asked grateful Glen. "Would you then have deducted something from my account?"

"Not on your life!" laughed the little man.

John A. Beaver was a short, lightweight man physically, but he had a magnificent head upon his shoulders, and was regarded as the maker of the village. His lumbering operations were on a large scale. He sold many logs, besides stocking the largest two-gang sawmill on the river.

"I can't help hesitating about accepting this liberality from you, Mr. Beaver," went on Glen. "I'm afraid ——"

"Not a word on that topic, lad," broke in the lumberman. "I have been watching you, my boy, for a good while. You and I are going to be better acquainted from now on. I heard all about that boom-cutting scrape, and was glad you came out with flying colors. Not many fellows of your age would have stood up to the rack as you did. No, it's not flattery I'm giving you; I mean every word of it, my lad. Go home and buy the good mother a nice present on the strength of your success."

The face of Glen clouded.

"I have no mother," he said softly.

"Pardon me, lad. I did not mean to touch your feelings. How long——"

"So long I have but the faintest memory of her, Mr. Beaver," informed the boy. "But I have the nicest aunt in all the world. I hope you may meet my Aunt Eunice Trescott some time, sir."

"I shall certainly do so. Give your aunt the present, then."

"Thank you, sir, I shall not forget."

"I want you to dine with me today, Glen."

"Why, sir, I ——"

"I understand all that," chuckled the big little man of Wenago, "but you have all the time there is. As I said a minute ago, you and I are bound to know each other better in the future. I haven't a chick or a child of my own, so I have a right to be good to some one else's youngster. Come on over to dinner with me."

Of course, after what had passed the boy could hardly refuse. He found the house imposing for the town, spick and span, and Mrs. Beaver one of the pleasantest women he had ever met. She made him at home at once. She asked him all about his life at Oxbow, after the adventures on the river rafting, and smiled sympathetically when she heard about Jack Adams and his horn.

"I knew an Adams once, down in Maine. That is a fine family name, as old as the country," she vouchsafed.

Mr. Beaver had a fine library into which he told Glen to delve to his heart's content. Despite his first intentions the boy remained over night with the Beavers, and had a delightful time glancing over the many interesting books of history, biography, and fiction, the latter consisting of copies of Dickens, Scott, and Cooper. It was the latter author who most interested the boy raftsman. Then the biography of Washington gave him food for reflection, but the story of the Millboy of the Slashes, who afterward became a great statesman, filled his boyish imagination with the most elevating thoughts.

"You like to read, I see."

A hand on his shoulder roused Glen from his deep and absorbed study of Henry Clay.

"Oh, Mr. Beaver, what a lot of nice books you have."

"Would you like to take some of them home with you, Glen?"

"Oh, if I might?"

"Of course you shall," chuckled the lumberman. "You see, when I first came West I couldn't bear the idea of leaving all my books behind. In my old New Hampshire home we had enough and to spare. My father before me was a great reader—a scholar I might say."

"Anybody would have a liberal education after reading all these books," said the boy, in an awed tone

It seemed like being in another world, set down here in the atmosphere of so much knowledge. He looked upon Mr. Beaver with much greater awe than ever

"Oh, I haven't read them all," smilingly remarked the lumberman. "I try to inform myself, however. A man cannot be too well versed in his country's history. I like you all the more for your interest in literature."

"And it is a rare treat for me!" exclaimed the boy.

Glen and John A. Beaver became fast friends from that hour. The boy could not resist contrasting this man with the two millowners for whom he had worked in the past. The comparison, of course, elevated the Wenago man very high indeed.

"It will be at least a month before I shall raft any lumber," said the millowner that evening, as he sat with Mrs. Beaver and Glen in the parlor. "I want you to boss the job, Glen."

"Indeed, I should like to——

"Of course, of course!" chuckled the other. "Have you set your price?"

"Price? I ——"

"You had one season's rafting for the man at Old Woman's Bend," uttered Mr. Beaver, quickly. "You know, of course, what it is worth to raft a lot of lumber and shingles."

"I know that it very much depends on certain contingencies," said the boy, smiling. "I had some trouble, as you remember, Mr. Beaver.

"So you did, my lad. One thing, however, is that if there comes any trouble with the millowners at Oxbow, you shall not suffer any loss because of it; that will fall upon me. I have had some trouble myself, but I think those fellows have learned something since last year. I will have only lumber, Glen and that is safer to handle than shingles."

"Oh, very much so."

"Then you will help me out, lad?"

"Anything I can do to help you, sir, will be cheerfully done."

"Good! I knew it would be so."

Glen mounted Black Jim next morning, highly pleased with the outcome of his last winter's logging. He felt grateful to John A. Beaver for his fair dealing, which seemed to the boy more generous than just.

"Good-by, Mrs. Beaver," Glen called to the wife of the millowner, as she came down the walk and stood with bared head at the gate. "I shall tell Aunt Eunice about you."

"That's right, Mr. Dayton. Tell her to come up some time and see me."

"She'll be glad to do it, Mr. Beaver."

Glen galloped away. He realized a certain relief now that his winter's work was over, and that he had made a snug sum during the time. He had now nearly two thousand dollars to his credit. Another year of rafting and he might count on adding another thousand, when he would be in a position to command something even better than he had yet undertaken.

The boy was dreaming of future conquests in the business line. For a youth of his age he believed he had done as well as the most of them. He wondered what sort of work Shedd Weatherby had for him that he assured Glen would coin a mint of money. It did not matter; Glen preferred to work for a man like Beaver, no matter how alluring the inducements Weatherby might hold out.

Galloping down into a small gully, the boy rode Black Jim into a creek where the animal slaked his thirst with eager haste. The horse was panting, indicating that his master had ridden him at great speed since quitting Wenago.

"Only a mile farther and we'll stop for refreshments, Jim, old chap," soothed the rider, stroking the horse's mane.

It was then that Glen heard a shout beyond the further hill, accompanied by the sound of swift-flying wheels. The next moment a buckboard dashed into view, coming directly toward the boy. There was [illegible] occupant of the rig, an elderly man, hatless, with streaming hair and white, alarmed face

Down into the creek dashed the single horse and buckboard.

"Hello!" called Glen.

Not a sound from the man, who plied his whip with the fury of desperation Thru the creek, dashing water almost into the face of the boy on horseback, sped the vehicle, going over the rise into the copse crowning the hill behind Glen.

As the man swept by Glen had noticed a dash of blood across his white cheek. And furthermore the fleeing man was the mysterious hermit of Yellow Swamp. What did it mean?

As if in answer to his question, a man mounted on a coal-black horse rode into view from the opposite hill, and ambled down to where he faced the lad sitting carelessly on Black Jim.

CHAPTER XX.

THE man on the black horse was a stranger to Glen. A pair of keen black eyes shone from beneath a slouch felt hat.

"Did you see him? Which way did he go?" questioned the man

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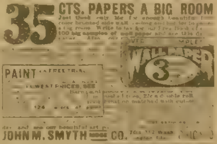
The Treatment of Influenza or La Grippe

It is quite refreshing these days to read of a clearly defined treatment for Influenza or la grippe. In an article in the "Lancet Clinic," Dr. James Bell, of New York City says he is convinced that too much medication is both unnecessary and injurious.

When called to a case of la grippe, the patient is usually seen when the fever is present, as the chill which occasionally ushers in the disease, has practically passed away. Dr. Bell then orders that the bowels be opened freely with salts, "Actoids" or citrate of magnesia. For the high fever, severe headache, pain and general soreness, one anti-kamnia tablet every three hours is quickly followed by complete relief. Ask for A-K Tablets. They are also unexcelled for headache, neuralgia and all pains



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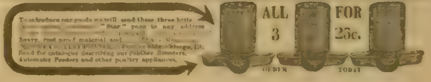

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Glen pointed over his shoulder, then asked: "For what is he wanted?"

"He's a criminal," declared the stranger. "He got away from the officers in Chicago. Ah, but Grinder Gragg is one tough man!"

The speaker's voice had a foreign accent

"A criminal? Why, I know the man. He is Mr. Hethridge—

A shrill laugh cut short the boy's speech.

"Tell that to the marines, my boy!" jarringly croaked the man. "As I told you, he is an escaped jail bird, wanted mighty bad by officers of the State of Illinois. There's a reward—that's what I am after."

"Did you shoot?"

"You bet I did. Dead or alive, I mean to fetch him," laughed the other

Glen was stunned at the revelations of the stranger. He had long ere this formed a favorable opinion of the queer Mr. Hethridge. That he was eccentric was admitted, but that he was a criminal the boy could hardly believe.

"I hope there is some mistake," returned Glen, who was anxious to give his friend a chance to escape. Not that he would aid a criminal, but that he distrusted the fellow who pursued him. There was something in the appearance of the man on the black horse that disquieted the boy. He might be a detective, but Glen doubted.

"There can't be a mistake," insisted the horseman. "I know the fellow well; he's the worst crook in the business. His name, or one of them, is Grinder Gragg. Of course, he may have a dozen aliases, as most criminals do."

"For what particular crime is this man Gragg wanted?"

"Robbery and murder."

"When did he escape from the Illinois officer

"Only last week."

"Had he been in confinement before this?"

"Oh, yes, for a dozen years. He is a desperate man."

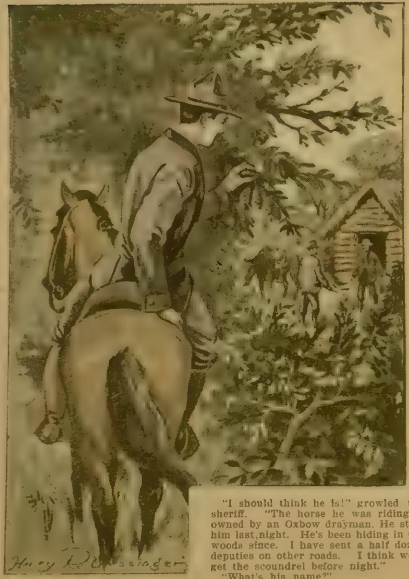
Glen felt relieved. The man's statement did not tally with the facts regarding his queer friend Hethridge, since the latter had been in Michigan several months at least—yes, even more than a year. It had been now that length of time since he, Glen, had rescued him from the flooded cabin in Yellow Swamp

"Don't go any farther, sir," suddenly spoke the boy. "You are on the wrong trail If you should kill Hethridge you would yourself be a murderer. I know the man "

"Did you speak to him?"

"Yes, but he did not reply."

"Of course he wouldn't," jeeringly.



He saw a second man come out of the thatched hut.

"Well, boy, say nothing about your seeing me to anybody. Understand?"

There was a sullen ring in the low speech of the rider.

"Are you alone in pursuit of the fugitive?"

"Oh, no, there are others. Well, so-long," and the man touched his heel to the flank of his steed and rode on.

"Queer fellow," thought the boy.

As soon as the black horse disappeared beyond the brow of the rise, Glen wheeled Black Jim and followed after. Altho his time was limited, he was curious as well as apprehensive.

He caught sight of the other turning off the main road into a cross-haul which some lumberman had made at an earlier day.

"So!" ejaculated Glen, as he rode swiftly after.

He soon caught a view of the man he was pursuing; he had halted before a small shanty of pine logs, now evidently deserted. Glen withdrew into a screen of scrub-oaks and continued to watch the stranger. He saw a second man come out of the thatched hut and stand beside the black horse. The two engaged in an animated conversation, of which the hidden boy heard but little Presently the second man went inside, coming out later with another horse, saddled and ready for a run. This man mounted, and the two dashed swiftly out of view

Glen debated the thought of following. He gave up the idea almost as soon as conceived, wheeled Black Jim, and galloped back to the main road. He believed that the story the stranger had told was false. He was confident he should hear more about this episode in the near future.

Riding swiftly along, Glen neared the sand dunes at the mouth of the Muskalong, when he encountered a buckboard in which were two men, one of whom he recognized as the county sheriff

"Hello, Glen!" hailed the sheriff

The boy returned the salute.

"Did you meet a couple of men on horseback, boy?"

"One man in pursuit of another, sheriff," answered Glen. Thereupon he gave an account of his strange adventure.

"The scoundrel!" exclaimed the officer. "He must have tried to hold up and rob somebody. He's the coolest scamp I ever had anything to do with."

"So the man on the black horse is a lawbreaker?" queried interested Glen.

"I should think he is!" growled the sheriff. "The horse he was riding is owned by an Oxbow drayman. He stole him last night. He's been hiding in the woods since. I have sent a half dozen deputies on other roads. I think we'll get the scoundrel before night."

"What's his name?"

"Gus Hunniwell."

"Oh, yes, I have heard of him."

Glen had heard of the famous outlaw who had broken out of several State prisons during the past few years. He was known as a dangerous man, and the boy felt a thrill at thought of how easily he might have been made a victim of the convict's malevolence. He could well understand now how the outlaw had made an attack upon Simon Hethridge with a view to robbery. The man whom Hunniwell had met at the lone shanty was, of course, an accomplice, altho the sheriff was not quite clear as to the second man's identity.

The oak openings along the river for a dozen miles out of Oxbow were thinly inhabited by a questionable class of human beings, and doubtless the shantyman was in some way aiding the hunted outlaw to escape from the officers of the law. Glen gave the sheriff an accurate description of the two men, after which officer and companion drove swiftly in pursuit.

The boy hastened his return to the mouth, going directly to the new national bank, in which he deposited the bulk of his winter's earnings.

When Aunt Eunice heard of the generosity of Mr. Beaver, she smiled happily. At least one of the rich lumbermen was worthy of honor

"John A. Beaver is the best man I ever worked for, aunt," declared Glen.

"He is truly a very fine gentleman," she agreed.

"And Mrs. Beaver is a nice woman," went on the enthusiastic boy "She talked to me as tho she had known me all her life. She wants you to call on her sometime, Aunt Eunice."

"Does she really?"

"She told me to ask you."

"Of course. A polite manner with all ladies," smiled the aunt.

"But not with Mary Beaver, aunt."

"Goodness, Glen—Mary Beaver!"

"Well, that's what he called her just Mary, and it sounded so nice."

"He?"

"Mr. Beaver, of course."

The aunt laughed heartily at the unconventional manner of her nephew.

"I hope you didn't call her Mary to her face, Glen?"

"No, of course not," and the boy laughed, too. "But she fits that name all right. They are a dandy old couple, as homey and friendly as a couple of pigeons."

"And you have agreed to raft Mr. Beaver's lumber?"

"Yes, in a way. I could have had a job with Mr. Dedham, only I wasn't quite satisfied with him. Then Shedd Weatherby said he had something worth while if I would engage with him."

"But you could not trust him, Glen."

"That is it exactly. When there are men like John A. Beaver to do business with you may be sure that I'm not going to deal with the Weatherbys and Dedhams."

Glen told his aunt about his adventure on the road, and she seemed considerably disturbed.

"I do hope they will succeed in capturing that man," she said gravely. "You were in real danger when you talked with Hunniwell, Glen."

"Oh, no, I don't think he would harm any one he did not think had money.

"But you had that check from Mr Beaver."

"That's so," cried the boy. "My, I guess if Hunniwell had known of that he'd have done something desperate! And all the while I was talking with him I never thought of that. Perhaps I did have a narrow escape, after all."

A few days later Glen went down to the dock to see the first steamboat of the season come in. Days were becoming sunny, and rafting would soon be here. The steamer drew up to the dock. Glen smiled when he saw a squat figure standing next the rail. With him was a stockily built old man who Glen readily guessed was Jack's grandfather.

The hearty greeting accorded Jack Adams from Glen assured that jovial youth of the affectionate regard in which he was held by his former employer.

"This is Gran'ther Adams, Glen," said Jack. "Shake hands and be good friends. My gran'ther has come to Oxbow to engage in the blacksmith trade. I told him wages were better here than at Waukegan. Don't you think so?"

"I certainly do," acquiesced Glen, as he clasped the hand of the elder Adams. There was a comical twinkle in the blacksmith's eye that assured our boy raftsman that he had some of the humor that was characteristic of the grandson.

Glen conducted them both to the cottage where they were pleasantly received by his aunt.

The boy went over to the Waldens' before quitting [illegible] his lumbering operations. Letty met him with a pale and troubled face. She had been

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reading a letter she held in her hand.

"Did you know that Jared has gone?" the girl asked.

"I imagined he'd take a hike soon," responded Glen, who had tried in vain to induce his cousin to take a berth under him at rafting.

"I think it's mean of him to go away like this—and you knew without telling me, Glen!" There was rebuke in the girl's voice and glance.

"Why, what about it, anyhow? Jared expected to go upon the lakes in the spring——"

"Lakes nothing, sir," cried the indignant girl. "Jared's gone West to make his fortune; to the gold diggings, he says, and bids me a long good-by. Why should he go like this and never come to see us? It's a shame!" and Letty covered her face with her apron and began to cry.

"So the fellow's dug out for the far West," mused Glen. "A sudden move, it seems to me. Well, never mind, Let; you'll be here when he comes back, which won't be a long time, be sure of that."

The girl tore the letter in two, threw the parts on the floor, and stamped on them. After that she turned and ran from the room.

Glen wondered. He had never seen the girl in such a passion before, and wondered at it. Of course the boy and girl had quarreled, and Jared had gone off in a huff. Glen did not ask for an explanation.

Ned Somers met Glen as he was crossing the street on his return to his home. The two halted, facing each other on the crossing. Ned held out his gloved hand.

"Can't we be friends, Mr. Dayton?" he asked in a low voice.

"No," said Glen, "we can't till you own up to lying about me."

"I was mistaken about the saloon affair, Glen. That's been made clear, and both Myra and Uncle Shedd want you to come over."

"I haven't the time," responded Glen, who was still sore over some things that had taken place in the past. As for Somers, he despised the fellow.

"You did me a good turn in the woods," began Ned, dropping his hand to his side. "I wished to thank you for that, but since you are so blamed uppish about accepting my friendship, you can go your way. I told Myra you were bull-necked, and now I know it."

Glen, suddenly aroused at the sneer in the voice of the speaker, laid hold of his collar, jerked him aside, and strode on, giving no heed to the angry invective the boy bookkeeper hurled after him.

This most interesting story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

THE DETAILS.

"They said," related the young man, who is thrifty and therefore prosperous, "that Dr. Wiseun made a point of adjusting his bills according to the financial standing of his patients. Of course, I wasn't going to pretend that I was a pauper, but I didn't have it in mind to breeze into his office like Willie, the Boy Financier, and then have to retire from the world for six months to lay by enough wealth to pay his bill.

"A good many years ago I had been to Dr. Wiseun to have my eyes tested, but as father was then paying the bills I was not specially interested in the matter. I believe I even bragged a little about European trips and my fine new bicycle, and my adventures at college—and I believe father had to cut down on porterhouse steak for a time to adjust his bank account in consequence.

"I recollected that at that time Dr. Wiseun had a genial and conversational way with him that led you, if innocent and trusting, to bare your inmost soul and the exact size of your income to him before you knew it. On the present occasion I determined to be coldly polite and make a noise as much like a clam as possible. My eyes were in a pretty bad state, and I had to go to Dr. Wiseun because he was said to be about the best of his kind.

"'Ah, yes, Mr. Crimp—Mr. Amos Crimp, is it not?' the doctor murmured, as I entered. He was as genial as he would have been if we had dined together the night before and had played golf together all our lives. It was ten years since I had seen him, but his voice was just the same.

"My first stunned surprise over his calling my first name was modified when I recollected the deadly card index system. I verily believe if Noah walked into one of these modern offices the cool young person at the desk, after stowing him away on the mourners' bench to wait his turn, would be able to slide into the doctor's office by its side door and reel off from a card instantly found in the files: 'Noah, grape grower; received treatment in the year '29, Friday, March 11. Fitted to double lenses. Owns private yacht. Income fluctuating. Bill last time, $150.'

"'Thank you, Miss Jinks,' the doctor would say with a frown. 'Good as far as it goes, but incomplete. You have noted nothing about the size of his family, whether they have a summer cottage and if his daughters make formal debuts.'

"Well, Dr. Wiseun said to me: 'Mr. Amos Crimp, is it not?'

"'The same,' said I. 'Something seems wrong with my eyes,' I added inanely.

"'Ah-h, yes,' he said, surveying them dubiously. 'That's easily seen—um! Why will people neglect their eyes till the last possible moment?' he remarked half to himself, in a resigned way.

"'Is it as bad as that?' I asked, startled.

"'Now, don't get nervous,' Dr. Wiseun said, genially. 'We'll have them all right soon. Long time since I've seen you, sir! Let me see. You were in college then, weren't you? I recollect we had some interesting talks on some mutual hobby—what was it? Oh, bicycles! How enthusiastic you were about bicycles! Well, all the boys were then. I suppose when you discarded your wheel you took up some other fad? What did you fall for?'

"This was where I double-locked my tongue. It flashed over me that if the doctor discovered that I had a motor car I'd have to pawn the machine to settle with him. He was trying to bring up to date his information about me. The general impression is that if a family has a motor car it can afford the luxury and must expect to pay double prices.

"'Oh, I don't know,' I told him. 'I collected butterflies and then I did a bit of canoeing. Lately I've played golf a' little—but I don't belong to any clubs. They're too expensive!'

"'H'm!' said the doctor. 'There's so much nowadays to attract a young man—every one seems going in for hydroplanes and racing cars and everything speedy. Just look thru this aperture in the wheel, please. Now, automobiling——'

"'Dangerous sport,' I interrupted, firmly. 'So many accidents. Dusty business, too, and hard on the eyes—that is, I should think so. Will I have to have the lenses changed?'

"'Just one of them,' Dr. Wiseun told me. 'I'll have to treat the inflamed lids a few times. Nothing serious.'

"I galloped out of the office jovially. I had not perjured myself, and yet I had given the doctor no information.

"Then at dinner the next day my angel mother said: 'I dropped in at Dr. Wiseun's today to see about my reading glasses. He spoke of your having been there yesterday, Amos, to see about your sore eyelids. I told him I just knew if you kept on driving your motor cars without goggles you would have something awful——'

"'Did you say "car" or "cars" to him, mother?" I asked, in trepidation.

"'Why, I said "cars," Amos! There are two cars in the family, you know!'"

* * *

His Destination.

The excitement of the biggest wheat crop he had ever grown led a farmer near Winfield, Kans., to rouse his men at three o'clock in the morning on the first day of the harvest.

One Ozark "hill billy," who had sought work in the Western wheatfields, tumbled out of bed at the farmer's call and was eagerly eating breakfast when his fellow workmen appeared. After he had stowed away a quantity of hot cakes, four fried eggs, and two cups of coffee, he arose from the table and grabbed his suitcase. The farmer caught the gleam of the wanderlust in his eye.

"Look here!" he said in alarm. "Where are you startin' to?"

The "hill billy" did not stop, but called back over his shoulder:

"To find some decent place where I c'n sleep the rest of the night."

* * *

His Notice.

The following interesting notice appeared in the columns of an enterprising Minnesota newspaper:

"I have been instructed by the village council to enforce the ordinance against chickens running at large and riding bicycles on the sidewalk.—Harry Shells, Village Marshal."

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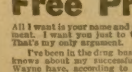

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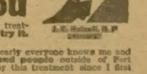

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THE REASON.

There once was a boy, who, when he was small,
Could never read Robinson Crusoe at all.
Now, what the reason he suffered such woe?
The name of the youngster was Daniel Defoe.

TACTFULNESS.

There lived an oyster in an oyster bed and his name was Alexander. He was a tactful oyster—quite tactful and unobtrusive—and he made a point of never asking questions about things that did not concern him.

Now it chanced one evening that a prince and princess came walking along the river bank where the oysters lived, and as the princess was kindly and well brought up, she said sweetly, "Good evening, oysters."

All the oysters replied in chorus, "Good evening, princess," and then, as they did not wish to be intrusive, they relapsed into silence.

Then the prince and princess sat down and talked and talked and the oysters thought and thought, especially the tactful oyster. What he especially thought about was the princess, for she was beautiful and had been most kind in saying, "Good evening, oysters."

The next night it happened again that the prince and princess came down to the river bank, and the same things happened as on the previous night. This time the tactful oyster wondered and wondered what made the prince and princess come down to the river bank.

After that the prince and princess came every night, and the princess never failed to say "Good evening, oysters," after which she would converse with the prince for the rest of the evening, and the tactful oyster would think over and over again, "Why does the princess come down to the river bank?" Once he even went so far as to call to the princess as she was leaving, "Oh, by the way——" but then he remembered that he always made a point of never asking questions about things that did not concern him, and he relapsed into embarrassed silence.

All the oysters ventured their opinions on the question, and all the opinions were different. Alexander—you remember that was the oyster's name—grew more and more dismal every day, for he greatly admired the princess and he feared that some day she would cease to come.

At last, however, something happened to throw light on the mystery. A large black crow perched on a branch overhanging the river and entered into conversation with the oysters.

"Do you know," said they, "why the princess comes every day to the river bank?"

"Certainly I know," said the crow, in a superior tone. "I heard some one ask her that very question today as she walked in her garden."

"And what did she say?" asked all the oysters at once, including Alexander, who had quite forgotten that he made a point of never asking questions about things that did not concern him.

"She said," replied the crow, with pompous dignity, "she said that she came to the river every evening—to see the oysters!"

Then there was a most amazing outburst from the gratified oysters. They talked all together and most fluently, so that the crow wearied of their chatter and flew away.

That evening when the prince and princess arrived they found the oysters in a most talkative mood—all except Alexander, who so deeply admired the princess that he scarcely dared to speak when she was near. All the other oysters did their best to entertain the princess, and took up so much time with their remarks that the prince was obliged to sit silent on the river bank. ("But then," whispered one of the oysters to Alexander, "he has talked with her a good deal already and, after all, she comes to the river bank to see us.")

When the princess rose to go, after conversing politely with the oysters for three-quarters of an hour, she turned to the prince and said sadly: "I am afraid we cannot come to the river bank in the evening any more."

When he heard that Alexander's heart sank as far as it could sink within the restricted limits of his shell, for he so admired the princess that her coming in the evening was the brightest event in his day.

"But," continued the princess, "to remind me of the pleasant evenings we have passed here, I should like to take one of these oysters home with me for a pet. I should like to take that one," and she pointed to Alexander, who had remained silent in an admiring attitude all the evening.

When he heard that Alexander's heart rose to the top of his shell so suddenly that he actually bounced a bit out of the water. When he had accepted the princess' kind invitation the prince carried him home and the princess put him in a beautiful aquarium, where he lived as her special pet, always remembering to be most [illegible] questions about things that did not concern him.

THE OAK.

The oak is one of the largest, handsomest trees, often living to a great age and easily holding its place as "monarch of the forest." The historic oak at Salem, N. J., and the Blunston oak, at Darby, Pa., can each lay claim to between 200 and 300 years of age. Sometimes these trees live for centuries longer.

We have different kinds of oaks. Some of the best known are the white, scarlet, pin, bur, chestnut oak, black, and bear. Their leaves vary in shape, but all are wavy edged. When these are about half grown, the tiny red and yellow blossoms appear, growing in little clusters the whole length of the long drooping stems.

The oaks are the only trees bearing seeds called acorns. Each nut is in a cup or shell which protects it. The bur oak bears acorns having a pretty fringe of scales, which has given them the name of mossy cup acorns.

THREE TRICKS.

If you hold your hands across your chest in a straight line with the tips of the forefingers pressed together, it is impossible for any one else, however strong, to take hold by your arms and pull those finger tips apart.

It is quite safe to stand a person against a wall with his heels touching it, lay a coin on the floor a foot or two in front of him and say the coin is his if he can pick it up without moving his heels from the wall.

Another impossibility is to stand sideways against a wall, with the left cheek, left heel and left leg touching it, and then raise the right leg. Try these tricks and you will have a good deal of amusement out of them.

THE FIRST RIDDLE.

The first riddle on record is that propounded by Samson to the thirty companions who came to the marriage feast of his wife—afterward burned to death with her father by the Philistines—and for the answer to which he promised to give them thirty sheets and thirty changes of garments. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." For the outcome, see the book of Judges, 14:12-20.

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The Castle of Lies.

(Continued From Page 17.)

still a question or two to ask. If Captain Forbes is imprisoned in the tower there, why did he permit you to play the hero alone? Why is he not with you? Have you pulled the wool over his eyes as you did over the eyes of Miss Brett? It seems to me a little remarkable that he should trust a man who has tricked him more than once."

Locke's cool question staggered me. I had no intention of lying, but my hesitancy did not lessen his growing distrust of my motives.

"There was no more time to explain things to him than there is to you. Besides, he would not have believed me," I muttered.

"As I do not believe you," he answered, with some sternness. "As I shall not believe you until you take pains to make things a little more clear. The Countess Sarahoff it is who tells you of the peril of Prince Ferdinand. She takes you into her confidence; that in itself scarcely strengthens my trust of you. But this woman is the accomplice of Dr. Starva. Why, then, is she suddenly so anxious to disconcert his plans?"

"Starva has turned traitor. Have I not told you that he trapped Madame de Varnier with the rest of us?"

I was becoming desperate. The minutes were flying swiftly, and Locke was even more aggressive than when he had first surprised me. To reason with him was impossible unless I told him all. There was no time for that. Force alone could rescue me from my dilemma. If it was hopeless to disarm his suspicions, could I rob him of the revolver in his hip pocket? I made no further attempt to resist. I stood passively, waiting my chance.

"So Starva has turned traitor?" Locke questioned ironically. "But if the Countess Sarahoff is so anxious to outwit her former confederate—if the life of Prince Ferdinand is actually in peril and she would save him, why did she not send a man for that desperate work? Why did she not let Captain Forbes escape instead of you? Would king's life? Even if you [illegible] of a silly yarn, she has tricked you. You are clay in her hands; her kisses have bewitched you."

I made no answer to his taunts. Unconsciously he had loosened his hold. I stood as one crushed by his vindictive scorn. My attitude confessed defeat. Locke believed the acted lie when he had contemptuously scoffed at the truth.

"Once more, your errand, and no more lies. You wish to save Ferdinand; you pretend that is the futile errand Madame de Varnier sends you on. You would penetrate the stronghold of a desperate band unarmed—you who only this morning saw a young girl's life threatened and raised nó hand. If it was cowardice that made you hesitate, why should the coward play the hero so bravely now? Or was it that you are the ally of the very man whom you pretend you are anxious to confront empty-handed?"

"I have done my best to move you. What do you want? I am in your hands."

"I want the truth."

"I have told you the truth. If I lied it might avail me more," I said bitterly. "For the last time I entreat you. I have been proved a coward—twice. But this was to be my chance. I hoped to retrieve myself. But fate blocks the way with a fool who cannot see when a man is desperately in earnest. Ferdinand's murder is certain if we lift no hand to save him. Listen: In my pocket is the key to the little door just beyond yóu. Take it; let yourself into the hall; hide there and use the evidence of your own eyes."

"And let you slip from my hands? Not much! What is that?"

He turned abruptly. The accomplice of Dr. Starva who had been keeping guard before the door was running toward the passageway leading from the village street. I could hear distinctly the carriage wheels rumble over the cobblestones.

"For the last time," I besought. "There is not an instant to lose."

Still he hesitated, looking cautiously around the angle of the wall at the approaching carriage. His curiosity made him negligent.

This was my chance. One arm caught him about the neck; the other reached for his weapon. Then I pushed him violently backward and covered him, retreating myself toward the little door, the key in my hand.

"Stand back," I whispered fiercely. "Now take your choice. Go to the village; you can't go too quickly, you stubborn idiot. Come back with gendarmes; batter down the door. Or else come with me. You have accused me of cowardice more than once. Show you are a man. Quickly, your choice!"

I heard him chuckling softly to himself in the darkness.

"Well, I'm d——d!" he muttered, more than once. "Lead on, Macduff." As my side. [illegible] the look he was at

I pushed the little door open.

The hall was empty, but brilliant with the light of a hundred candles. No nook or cranny afforded us a safe hiding-place.

I leaped up the staircase with Locke at my heels. We had reached the gallery as the great door swung open.

Prince Ferdinand entered, Dr. Starva and his ally crowding him close on either side. The prince stepped into the hall with apparent confidence. But as he heard the door clang behind him he turned alertly to Dr. Starva.

"Where is Madame de Varnier?" he demanded in French.

"Madame de Varnier is unavoidably detained, your majesty. She has delegated me to receive you. Be assured, your majesty's welcome shall not be lacking in warmth. Will your majesty pray be seated? There are urgent matters of state to be discussed."

He pushed the prince brutally into a chair, bending over him with a hideous smile that would have done credit to the devil himself.

This remarkable story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00 and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Surprising Them.

"I am being punished because my son was bad at school," observed the tobacco merchant. "This is very severe discipline for my wife and me, I'm sure."

"How so?" asked the elderly gentleman, who had dropped in for the purchase of a stogie.

"Well, there is a new principal at the school, and he is so small that the boys didn't see him when he entered the room, and they were raising a great hullabaloo, with the principal right there in the room with 'em all the time. There was some punishment meted out to each boy, and my son was suspended. So he is hanging around home all the time, which is unbearable punishment for us."

"Unnecessarily harsh," sympathized Shad. "Too severe. But that is the way it always is. The law always punishes the innocent more than the guilty. When a man does wrong the law punishes his wife and children, and when a boy is punished it is awful for the folks at home.

"However, your present plight proves that it is a good idea to come upon kids quietly and unannounced, the way that little professor did, once in a while. It shows them in their true colors.

"It reminds me of my friend Slathers. He had so much confidence in his employes and clerks that he used to take a six months' holiday from his store every year. He said that things went on just the same as if he was there, even better.

"One day Slathers met a man who had to watch his own employes all the time, and the man was from Missouri and wouldn't believe what Slathers said regarding the rectitude of the Slathers workers. The man wanted to see for himself. So Slathers said he would prove the faithfulness of his hirelings. He let his beard grow beyond recognition and then, accompanied by the suspicious man, he went back to his home town and approached his own store.

"They went into the store and there was no one around. Slathers coughed gently and shuffled his feet. No response. Then he went and tapped gently on the showcase. Still no response. Then he stamped louder and louder and coughed louder and rapped very noisily on the counter.

"At last there was a show of life in the room at the rear of the store. A head was thrust around the partition for a minute and a voice said: 'Say, whiskers, don't get restless!'"

* * *

Very Polite.

It happened aboard a diner on an Eastern road, and the hero of the sketch was the waiter, a coal-black, exceedingly polite person, whose manner alone was proof sufficient that he lived to make life brighter and fairer for his patrons.

"Waiter," said a lone traveler, as he sat himself down at one of the little tables, "bring me grape-fruit, hot toast, coffee, and two poached eggs."

"Kunnel," stated the waiter, bending forward confidentially and speaking under his breath, "scuse me, suh, but effen I wuz you I'd tek somethin' else this mawnin' fur breakfast. I'm feared I can't reckermend the aigs."

"What's wrong with them—aren't they fresh, or what?" asked the white man.

"Well," said the darky, "they mout be fresh so fur as I knows. But to tell you the truth, suh, we ain't got no aigs today."

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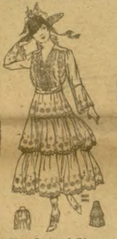
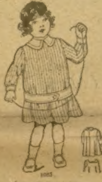
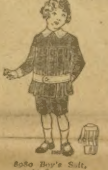


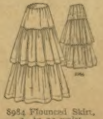
8824 Gathered Blouse, 34 to 42 bust.
8984 Flounced Skirt, 24 to 32 waist.



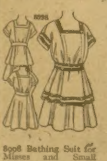
8085 Child's Apron, 2, 4 and 6 years.



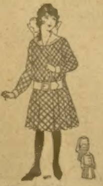
8080 Boy's Suit, 4 to 8 years.



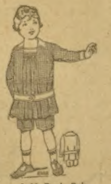
8984 Flounced Skirt, 24 to 32 waist.



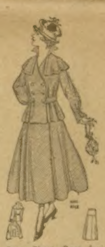
8998 Bathing Suit for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



8977 Girl's Dress, 8 to 14 years.



8988 Boy's Suit, 2, 4 and 6 years.



8991 Short Coat for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.
8915 Two-Piece Skirt with Yoke for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

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